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NARRATIVE

OF THE

ANTI-MASONICK EXCITEMENT,

IN THE

WESTERN PART OF THE STATE OF NEW-YORK,

DURING THE YEARS 1826, '7, '8,

AND A PART OF 1829.

BY HENRY BROWN, ESQ.
COUNSELLOR AT LAW.

BATAVIA, N. Y.
PRINTED BY ADAMS & M'CLEARY.
.....
1829.

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Northern District of New-York, To wit:

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the eighteenth day of April, in the fifty-third year of the Independence of the United States of America, A. D. 1829, HENRY BROWN, of the said District, has deposited in this Office the title of a Book the right whereof he claims as Author, in the words following, to wit:

"A Narrative of the Anti-masonick Excitement in the western part of the State of New-York, during the years 1826,-7-8, and a part of 1829. By HENRY BROWN, Esq. Counsellor at Law."

In conformity to the act of Congress of the United States, entitled "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;" and also, to the act entited "An act supplementary to an act entitled 'An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts and Books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned,' and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of Designing, Engraving and etching historical and other prints."

RICHARD R. LANSING,

Clerk of the District Court of the United States, for the Northern District of New-York.

EM
11-4-31

PREFACE.

In presenting the following narrative to the public, the author is aware of the existence of an honest prejudice in the minds of some, against new publications, on account of the multiplicity of books, which within a few years have been issued from the press.

"O books! books! books! it makes me sick
To think how ye are multiplied,
Like Egypt's frogs, ye poke up thick
Your ugly heads on every side.

If a new thought but shake its ear
Or wag its tail, tho' starved it look,
The world the precious news must hear,
The presses groan, and lo! a book."

While the author of this Narrative feels, in common with others, the full force and effect of the above remarks, he indulges a secret hope, that the importance attached to the anti-masonick excitement, which commenced about three years ago in this vicinity, and has since threatened to extend its ravages far and wide, which has excited the interest and absorbed the attention of politicians, of christians and infidels—in which women and children—the old and young—federalists and democrats—republicans, Clintonians, Bucktails, Adams men, Jackson men, Presbyterians, Churchmen, Baptists and Methodists, and even the modest and unassuming Quakers have all participated so largely, will afford a sufficient apology for presenting at this time to the public a narrative of its rise and progress. And he

has only to regret, that a task so important as that of writing its history, has not fallen into abler hands. Still, however, he flatters himself that this narrative, defective as it is, will not be entirely useless, and therefore has thought proper to give it publicity with all its faults and follies.

Those who are determined not to believe, will probably remain incredulous, and those who are determined to believe, even without proof, will probably retain their first impressions, for

"A man convinced against his will
Is of the same opinion still."

Should the following narrative be thought of sufficient consequence to call forth abuse, its author anticipates of course, his share. Experience has already shown, that the purity of an angel is no defence against the reckless efforts of a disappointed and desperate faction.

The author can only say, that its errours in point o fact (if any) are unintentional. Future disclosures wi probably render some errours manifest, and should th be the case, it will afford him pleasure hereafte correct them.

Honest men, however, whether masons c (for whose perusal this narrative is intended,) credit its statements and concur in its conclu for "truth is great and will prevail." Their s bation, next to the consciousness of having di ged his duty, will be the highest satisfaction wh can receive, and all that he asks or desires.

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A NARRATIVE

OF THE

Anti-Masonick Excitement.

CHAPTER I.

Introduction.

The Anti-masonick excitement in the western part of New-York, having for more than two years been the subject of much animated discussion, and having already become a matter of history, an impartial narrative of its origin and progress, cannot fail to interest the friends of civil liberty and social order.

To develope the causes which led, in the first place, to its existence—to trace the effects which it has thus far produced upon the morals, the politicks, and the religion of this ill fated region, and to predict the consequences likely to flow from its future operation, is a task difficult to perform; and if undertaken with the hope of arresting its progress, or the expectation of satisfying either of the parties, whom circumstances alone, (without any fault of theirs except in a few cases,) have placed in hostile array against each other, the attempt, at this time, would unquestionably prove abortive.

Nothing, however, tends so effectually to dispel the gloom of ignorance, and arrest the progress of

errour, as the diffusion of correct intelligence. Such, then, shall be my endeavour in the following narrative. And, although I am aware it may give offence to some, and satisfaction, perhaps, to no one, I can only say, in the language of Themistocles, "strike, but hear me."

CHAPTER II.

Origin of Free-Masonry—Its introduction into the United States, and into the western part of New-York.

Before entering upon the subject which the following pages are intended to elucidate, a few remarks in relation to the origin of Free-Masonry—its introduction into this country, and more especially, into this vicinity, will not, it is presumed, be thought improper.

The ambitious desire of an ancient origin, is, probably, as conspicuous among bodies of men associated for particular purposes, as it is among families. Hence, every church in christendom, during the middle ages, however obscure, if we are to credit its bishop, was apostolick in its origin. Hence the Chinese Historians with great labour, have endeavoured to trace the foundation of their empire, and the succession of their monarchs, from an era anterior to creation; and hence too, some masonick writers, with about as much plausibility, have attempted to trace the origin of free-masonry to Eden's bowers.

That operative masonry, is almost coeval with our race, cannot well be denied; but that speculative masonry, or free-masonry, as it is usually called, has existed during that period, as by some is foolishly pretended, candour compels us to acknowledge, is neither supported by reason, or established by authority. That, however, it is more ancient than any society now existing, must be conceded. Of this, the fact alone, that its origin cannot be ascertained, is of itself conclusive evidence. The grand lodge of England, from which the masonick lodges in this country originally derived their charters, was in existence in the year 597, some time previous to the reign of Alfred. Its records furnish us with the names of the several grand masters, who presided over that institution, from Austin the Monk, down to the present time. The most distinguished Prelates in the Church—the most eminent Heroes, Statesmen and Patriots in the realm, and the most illustrious Princes, who have adorned the throne, are included among their number.* Whatever therefore, may be

* The following is a chronological list of Masters and Patrons of the order in England, from the time of the Anglo Saxons; and, it is hoped, will afford some evidence, that free-masonry contains nothing repugnant to civil or religious liberty. A. D. 597, Austin the monk; 680, Bennet, abbot of Wirral; 857, Saint Swithin; 872, King Alfred the great; 900. Ethred, king of Mercia; 924, King Athelstane: 957, Saint Dunstan, archbishop of Canterbury; 1041, King Edward the Confessor; 1066, Gundulph, bishop of Rochester; 1100, King Henry I.; 1216, Peter de Rupibus, bishop of Winchester; 1272, Walter Giffard, archbishop of York; 1307, Walter Stapleton, bishop of Exeter; 1327, King Edward III.; 1357, William of Wykeham, bishop of Winchester; 1375, Simon Langham, abbot of Westminster; 1413, Henry Chichery, archbishop of Canterbury; 1443, William Waynfleet, bishop of Winchester: 1471, Richard Beauchamp, bishop of Salisbury; 1485, King Henry VII.; 1493, J. Islip, abbot of Westminster; 1515, Cardinal Wolsey;

the opinion of the present age, in relation to free-masonry, this truth must stand confessed. that it has existed from time immemorial, and that its origin is lost in the lapse of ages.

An attempt has recently been made, to prove by the silence of history, that masonry has no pretensions to antiquity. Its silence however, cannot with any pretence, be urged as proof of this position, so long as direct and positive evidence to the contrary exists in such abundance. It establishes however, another fact, of the utmost importance. It affords stronger evidence of the purity, which has marked its progress through every clime, than the united testimony of all its votaries. The religion of our Saviour as received from its author, breathing peace and good will to man, would have administered consolation to a ruined world in silence, and scarcely have obtained

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1549, Edward Seymour, duke of Somerset; 1551, John Poynet, bishop of Winchester; 1603, King James I.; 1607, Inigo Jones; 1625, King Charles I.: 1660, King Charles II.; 1674, George Villars, duke of Buckingham; 1685, Sir Christopher Wren; 1695, Charles Lennox, duke of Richmond; 1719, J. T. Desaguliers, L. L. D., F. R. S.; 1721, John, duke of Montague; 1722, Philip, duke of Wharton; 1726, William O'Brien, earl of Inchiquin; 1729, Thomas Howard, duke of Norfolk; 1732, Anthony Brown, lord viscount Montacute; 1735, T. Thynne, lord viscount Weymouth; 1736, John Campbell, earl of Loudon; 1738, H. Brydges, marquess of Caernarvon; 1746, James lord Cranstoun; 1752, John, lord Carysfort; 1757, Sholto, lord Aberdour; 1762, Washington Shirley, earl Ferrers; 1767, Henry, duke of Beaufort; 1772, Robert Edward, lord Petrie —1777, George, duke of Manchester; 1782, H. R. H. Frederick, duke of Cumberland; 1790, H. R. H. George, Pr. of Wales; 1813, H. R. H. Augustus Frederick, duke of Sussex; 1820, King George IV., Grand Patron. Further evidence of its antiquity, will be found in a subsequent chapter. The idea, of free masonry having originated in a society of mechanicks in London, 150 years ago, it is believed, is of recent origin.

a place in history, had it never been perverted.—That perversion has caused its annals to be written in blood, the fire and the faggot which have accompanied its march, and the cruelties and horrors practiced in its name, have given it that conspicuous place on the historick page, which our Saviour never intended. The virtuous matron, whose character suspicion has never stained, seldom adorns its page, while the profligate woman, lost to a sense of shame and decency, supplies matter for volums.—The majestick river which glides within its banks in silence to the ocean, bearing on its surface the produce of every clime, is but seldom mentioned; while the mad stream which o'erflows its banks, and destroys in a moment the toil of ages, amid whose shoals and quicksands the frail bark has often sunk, and its unwary pilot consigned to an untimely grave, fills every journal with tales of wo. Had free-masonry, as it is now pretended, been injurious to publick morals, subversive of human liberty, or hostile to our holy Religion, its brief and short lived story, would long since have been told, and its career of glory, hitherto so splendid, ere this been closed forever. The silence of history therefore, in relation to the masonick institution, is unquestionably a prouder monument of its excellence, than could ha v been reared by her toil, or cemented by her exertions.

Free-masonry having been established in Europe, long before the discovery and settlement of America, our pious and venerable ancestors, who migrated to this country, when it was a perfect wilderness, brought it of course with them. To procure, however, the

necessaries and conveniences of life, and to protect their infant settlements from the incursions of numerous savage tribes, residing within their borders for a number of years, were the chief objects of their solicitude. Masonry, therefore, for a long time, advanced to that eminence which it has since attained, by slow degrees. At the commencement of the American Revolution, it was confined principally to our large villages, and sea-port towns. A short time before the first blow was struck, which severed the British empire in twain, a number of lodges in the state of Massachusetts, which had received their charters from the mother country, formed themselves into a grand lodge, and assumed jurisdiction separate from the grand lodge of England. Thus it will be seen, that the masons of that day, preceded even its patriots in their march to Independence.—Dr. Joseph Warren, the illustrious patriot, who afterwards sealed with his blood, the sincerity of his faith and practice, and departed hence in a blaze of glory, was elected its first Grand Master; Washington succeeded to that distinguished post, and for a number of years presided over the masonick institution, as well as over the armies and counsels of his country. Our lamented Clinton, the late governor of New-York, was Grand High Priest of the order, at the time of his death, and no successor has yet been appointed. During the revolutionary war, and afterwards, masonry became extremely popular; and its growth, under the auspices of a Washington, a Franklin, a Hamilton, and a host of others, equally distinguished on the rolls of fame, was equaled only by the munificence of its object, and the

purity of its precepts. Lodges have since been established in almost every village in our country ; multitudes af all ranks and conditions, have sought, and obtained, admission within its walls. Its banners have floated in every breeze, and its works of charity and mercy, have vibrated in every ear.

Among the thousands and tens of thousands,* who have joined the institution, it would have been strange indeed, if many unworthy candidates had not found acceptance ; and equally strange, if many, apparently worthy at the time of their initiation, had not afterwards ceased to be so. The little family of our Saviour while on earth, consisting of but twelve members, contained a Judas. The most pious and exemplary churches in Christendom, are seldom without communicants, who do not by their conduct, disgrace daily the name of the meek and humble Jesus. That charity, therefore, of which the Apostle speaks, "which suffereth long, and is kind, " which is not easily provoked, which thinketh no " evil, which rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in " the truth, which beareth all things, hopeth all things, " and endureth all things," which with the assent of all mankind, has hitherto been extended to the christian church, would, if adopted at the present time, and reduced to practice by those who assume the name of christians, without regarding the precepts of christianity, at once relieve the masonick institution from a large portion of that popular odium, which the conduct of some of its members have so richly deserved.

* It is estimated that there are in the United States, about 3,000 Lodges, and between 150,000 and 200,000 members.

The western part of New York, the principal theatre of anti-masonick operations, was but a few years since, a howling wilderness. Nothing but the wolf and panther, uniting their discordant notes with the savage war whoop, had hitherto broke its awful silence. The white men came--the forests fell—the savage retired, and the wolf and panther fled before them.

In the settlement of a new country, the Spaniard, we are told, erects first a church—the Frenchman a ball-room, and the Yankee a tavern. The masons, however, in Le-Roy, a place of no ordinary celebrity, supposing it would be good economy to unite the three in one, it is said, first erected a lodge: of this however, we speak only from report. The lodge succeeding beyond their expectations; an application was in the next place made for a chapter.—This succeeded also, and the lodge and chapter afterwards continued in session day after day, some times for a whole week together. Elated with their success, and ambitious of extending masonry far and wide, they also procured a charter for an encampment; and so zealous were they in its cause, that a number, and among them Sir John Hascall, now an anti-masonick member of assembly from the county of Genesee, went to Utica, and were there created Knights of the Red Cross, Knights Templars, Knights of Malta, and of the Holy Order of St. John of Jerusalem. The celebrated Round House, precisely as well adapted to the purpose for which it was intended as though it had been in the shape of a triangle, was soon thereafter projected. While it was approximating slowly towards completion, by the aid,

and with the means of some publick spirited gentlemen in the village of Le-Roy, the anti-masonick excitement, occasioned by the abduction of William Morgan, commenced ; masonry became odious in the publick eye, and a large portion of the brethren, residing in Le-Roy, who had been first and foremost in its ranks, so long as it was popular, at once seceded. The round house was abandoned, and afterwards sold, by authority of a special act of the legislature, passed for that purpose, and purchased by some gentlemen in the village, whose object in so doing is not certainly known.

The disciples of our blessed Lord adhered to his cause so long as the miracles which he wrought gathered an admiring multitude around him ; but no sooner did armed men pursue him into the mount of Olives, with a view to arrest, and bring him before the Chief Priests and Elders, than "they forsook him and fled."

The secession of the Le Roy brethren, seems not to have been voluntary, or entirely free, at least from suspicion, of unworthy motives ; some of their number had been indicted for participation in transactions connected with Morgan's abduction. A noli prosequi about the time of their secession, was entered on their indictment, by the publick prosecutor, at the special instance and request of Col. Miller.— The defendants were at the same time taken into publick favour, and immediately acknowledged as leaders of the anti-masonick party.

Milo, the famous Cretan, so distinguished for his strength, it is said, knocked down a bullock with his fist, and afterwards devoured it at a meal. Elated with his performance, he attempted to rive an oak,

when his hands caught in the cleft, and he miserably perished. The masons in Le Roy, having as they supposed, already achieved wonders, probably thought themselves invulnerable ; but found, when it was too late, that the abduction of Morgan, was more than they could bear ; they therefore resolved to return their charter. The Alexandrian library, consisting of 700,000 volums, it is said, never gave as much light, as when it was burning. The brethren in Le-Roy, unquestionably conferred more favours upon the craft by the return of their charter, than by fifteen years of masonick labour.

Masonry took up its residence for a short time, in Batavia, before its introduction into the village of Le Roy : a lodge was chartered ; it flourished for a few years—then gradually declined, and to prevent its final extinction, was removed to Bethany, where it remains to this day.

Experience and observation teach us, that a lodge of free-masons, cannot exist and flourish without virtue. Dissention in the place where it is located—the want of moral principle among its members, or among the people in its vicinity, are alike injurious to its growth, and fatal to its prosperity. The cause of its decline in this place, with reference to the subject of this narrative, is of but little or no importance, and admits not, at this time, of profitable discussion. We shall therefore waive it for the present.

Batavia, however, on account of the celebrity which it has recently acquired, deserves a few passing remarks. Unfortunately for those who have hitherto felt, and still feel, an interest in its future welfare, it had acquired, during the late war, a character,

especially abroad, which many thought susceptible of improvement. Strangers resorting hither, were frequently regaled with exhibitions which did not, in every case, leave upon their minds, those favourable impressions which could have been desired. That many latent virtues existed among its citizens, has never been denied. A perfect statue, we are told by a celebrated Grecian sculptor, exists in every block of marble. The skill of the artist consists only in removing its superfluous parts. The virtues, however, alluded to as existing here, like the latent statue, concealed amid extraneous matter, having never been exposed to public view, and not having manifested themselves by any overt acts, it has hitherto been a doubtful question, particularly out of the village, whether the impressions formed during that period, ought not still to continue. The subject, however, is one of a delicate nature, and may not, perhaps, be fairly discussed, with entire freedom from personal danger. Bracton, a celebrated jurist in England, once wrote a treatise upon the law, and asserted the right of a husband to chastise his wife, "provided he did it with a stick no bigger than a man's thumb." Some neighboring dames, not satisfied with the law, as explained by the sage, afterwards made him a visit; and under pretence of ascertaining, with more certainty, the size of a lawful stick, allured him to a pond in his vicinity, where the venerable author narrowly escaped being drowned. Without, therefore, asserting, much less attempting to enforce, the right of chastising Batavia, for its faults or its follies. (if, peradventure, it has any,) even "with a stick no bigger than a man's thumb," we will, for the present,

leave its moral, political and religious character, wholly untouched. The spires of christian Churches, are said by some "to avert the wrath of deity offended." although many of its citizens, (there being three such in the village.) for the present, suppose themselves safe—the experiment perhaps may fail of success. We therefore suggest, without attempting to dictate on the subject, whether our precarious situation in that event, ought not to induce us, if for no other, at least for present purposes, to attempt some partial reformation in our public morals. The experiment, at all events, will be harmless.

In the year 1825, a new lodge was chartered here—in 1826, a chapter, and in 1827, the encampment, before that time located in Le Roy, was unfortunately removed hither. Neither the Lodge, chapter, or encampment, have recently been opened for the purpose of business, nor is it desirable that they ever should be. If the institution is corrupt, its doors cannot be too speedily closed.—If its principles are as pure as the angels in heaven, the folly of attempting to sustain it here, has already been evinced.

In relation to the progress of free-masonry elsewhere in the vicinity, we know of nothing in particular deserving our attention. We shall therefore, without further delay, proceed in our narrative, and in the first place invite the attention of our readers, to the circumstances preceding Morgan's abduction.

CHAPTER III.

David C. Miller—William Morgan—Circumstances preceding the Abduction of the latter.

The names of Miller and Morgan have so long and so often been connected with every thing relating to the subject before us, it is difficult to do it justice, without adverting briefly to each.

David C. Miller, who has recently filled a considerable space in the publick mind, in consequence of the part which he early took in the transactions about to be reviewed, and who has unquestionably been elected to the office of Clerk of the county of Genesee by means of their aid, located himself some years ago, in the village of Batavia, as the printer of a publick journal. Endowed by nature with a great deal of cunning—possessed of respectable talents, and familiar with the arts to which designing men frequently resort for the acquisition of power in cases of doubtful policy; and withal, enjoying great freedom from religious scruples, which usually deter the more conscientious from embarking in enterprizes of a suspicious character, he was admirably fitted to fill a station which the folly or depravity of a few misguided members of the masonick fraternity created, it seems, for his use and benefit. Sometime previous to the abduction of Morgan, a difficulty had arisen between Col. Miller and some of his political friends, which terminated in the establishment of the "People's Press," a paper printed in the village of Batavia, of politicks similar to those inculcated in the one of which Col. Miller was the editor and proprietor. As

there was, at that time, another paper in the village of opposite sentiments, and but little patronage for either, it was easy to foresee that both could not long be profitable. The "People's Press," owned by a number of individuals of respectable standing in community, could not fail of receiving a large portion of that patronage which had before been given to Col. Miller. The consequence, as might have naturally been expected, was a violent altercation between the two rival establishments. And, as in such controversies, little is usually gained but disgrace on both sides, nothing, it is believed, occurred on this occasion, to take it out of the ordinary course. As the patronage of the "People's Press" increased, the patronage of Col. Miller declined, till finally the publication of his paper ceased to be an object. By these proceedings, Col. Miller considered himself, (with what propriety I shall not assume the province of determining,) an object of persecution;* and, as it is said by physicians, the human body is predisposed sometimes to disease, so Col. Miller, in consequence of the above transactions, became predisposed to embark in any undertaking, however desperate, which should afford a prospect, though remote, of wealth or power. Embarrassed in his circumstances—inattentive to business—intemperate in his habits§—and,

*Col. Miller informs me, that he considered himself at that time, an object of masonick persecution. The efficient proprietors of the "People's Press," however, and a majority of their number were not, at that time, masons. Of course Col. Miller must have been mistaken in his surmises.

§Since writing this paragraph, Col. Miller has become a member of the temperate society, recently established in this place, and strong hopes are entertained of his reformation in the above particular.

with a family to support, he arose in his might, and with an energy of character, which till then had never been conceded him. called the Morgan excitement to his aid, and put to flight the whole phalanx of pretended friends and open foes.—

"The humblest worm will turn, being trodden on—
"The dove will peck, in safeguard of her young."

Col. Miller, although initiated many years before as an entered apprentice mason, in Albany, as soon as Morgan's intentions to publish the masonick secrets were proclaimed in publick, approved of the undertaking; and with the expectation of amassing thereby a fortune, agreed to become his partner.* In order, however, to give it currency, and effect a sale of the contemplated book, he foresaw the necessity of "creating a stir among masons;" and for that purpose, commenced abusing them individually and collectively. Some of their number, fell into his snare, indiscreetly retorted upon him, and thereby laid a foundation for one of the most singular and extraordinary events hitherto presented for the consideration of mankind.

William Morgan, whose name, by reason of his unfortunate catastrophe, has recently become familiar to the American people, was a native of Virginia, and born in Culpepper county, in that state, in the year 1775 or 6. Of his early history, little or nothing is known. It has been asserted, though probably more for effect than for any thing else, that he was a

*That the object to be attained by publishing Morgan's book was money, is evident from the fact that it was sold at first for one dollar a copy, when the expense of publication could not have exceeded seven or eight cents. Upon this subject, see further evidence hereafter.

captain in Gen. Jackson's army, and fought and distinguished himself at the battle of New-Orleans. It has also been asserted, that he belonged to a band of pirates, and was sentenced to be hanged; but pardoned upon condition of his entering that army. These, however, are merely reports, got up and circulated since his abduction, and neither of them are probably entitled to any credit.* In October 1819, at the age of 43 or 4, he married Lucinda Pendleton, of Richmond, Virginia, now Lucinda Morgan, of Genesee county, whose misfortunes have since been the subject of much commisseration, then in her 16th year. In 1821 they removed to Canada, where he commenced the business of a brewer, near York, in the Upper Province. The destruction of his brewery afterwards, by fire, reduced him, it is said, to poverty, and he removed to Rochester, in this state, where he worked at his trade, and received occasionally, some assistance from the masonick fraternity. From thence, he removed to Batavia, in the county of Genesee, and worked also at his trade, which was that of a mason, till his unfortunate abduction in 1826. During the time of his residence in the latter place, he was very intemperate, and frequently neglected his family. Without the advantages of education in early life, he had subsequently acquired a com-

*It has been pretended that his commission was among some papers taken at Batavia, upon an attachment, a short time before he left this place. The charge, however, is made without any foundation whatever. If he had been a captain, as pretended, the records of the war department at Washington, would have furnished the requisite proof; and it is not probable, if such was the fact, that we should have been left wholly in the dark, on a subject to which so much importance has been attached.

petent knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetick, and was a tolerable good accountant. Possessed of a good share of common sense, and considerable suavity of manner, he appeared respectable; and when uninfluenced by ardent spirits, was a pleasant, social companion.

He was made a royal arch mason in Le Roy, about four or five years ago; but when or where he received the previous degrees, is not certainly known; and we have no means at present, of ascertaining. When it was proposed in 1826, or perhaps as early as 1825, to establish a chapter in Batavia, a petition to the grand chapter of the state was drawn up, for the purpose of obtaining a charter. The individual to whom it was intrusted for procuring signature, (without reflecting that all who signed the petition would become members of course,) inadvertently presented it to him, and he being at that time a zealous mason, signed it. Before, however, the petition was presented to the grand chapter, some individuals, unwilling that he should become a member, on account of his habits, thought it advisable to draw up a new petition, which was accordingly done —the new one presented, and a charter obtained. When the charter subsequently arrived, and the chapter was about being organized, it was found, much to his surprise, that his name was not included among their number, and of course, that he could not be admitted without a unanimous vote. Being unable at that time, to procure such vote, he was excluded. At this, he took offence; but whether it influenced his subsequent conduct, is not, and can not certainly be known. At all events, however, from being the

warm and zealous friend of the institution, as he had hitherto pretended to be, he became at once, its determined foe. His habits being dissolute—his principles hanging loosely about him, and the companions with whom he usually associated, spurring him on to the undertaking—the immense wealth, which he, and probably they, supposed would reward his exertions, induced him, at every hazard, to attempt the revelation of masonick secrets. Soon after this determination was formed, his intentions were publickly announced. At first, it was regarded by all, masons as well as others, as a thing of little or no importance. It was soon perceived, however, that an apparent uneasiness was felt on the part of some inconsiderate masons. This, of course, stimulated Miller, Morgan and their friends, to persevere in the work. Some unfortunate altercation took place in the village newspapers. This added fuel to the flame just beginning to burn. Efforts to suppress the work, were talked of; and some, it is said, proposed doing it by force. The respectable part of the masonick fraternity, supposing that nothing of that kind would seriously be attempted, and like a nine day wonder, that it would soon vanish and wholly disappear, took little or no interest in the question. While they were folding their arms in expectation that the fire, kindled by folly, would soon be extinguished in its own ardour, an inconsiderate scheme, it seems, was concerted, by individual masons, for suppressing, by force, the contemplated work, which, in its execution afterwards, created an explosion which has been heard throughout the globe, and which some contend, has shaken to its centre, an in-

stitution, reared by virtue, and consecrated by time.

We ought, perhaps, here to remark, and we do it with perfect confidence, that the measures above referred to, were never concerted in any lodge, chapter or encampment, in the state, or elsewhere, and that they originated wholly in the minds of a few misguided men. It has, we are aware, been frequently asserted, that the grand lodge of the state, was deeply implicated, and that the late governour Clinton, then its Grand Master, issued a masonick edict for suppressing "the Book," even at the expense of human life; and in support of this position, we understand, the expressions of individual masons, have frquently been adduced as proof.

A desire to conceal the atrocity of crime, under the sanction of distinguished names, is perfectly natural. Hence, it was desirable to those suspected of guilt, and convicted at all events of folly, that the responsibility of their acts, if possible, should be removed from themselves to others. The declarations therefore, of those suspected, implicating governour Clinton and the grand lodge, ought to have been received with the utmost caution.

The grand lodge was not in session from the time of the annunciation of Morgans intentions, till long after his abduction. The same is true also, respecting the grand chapter—and the reputation of governour Clinton, since translated to another, and we hope, to a better world, was too firmly established in this community, to be injured by such unfounded calumnies. His official acts, too, triumphantly refute the assertions.

The views of the writer of this narative, upon the

subject then begining to be agitated, were submitted to the publick in an article published in "the Spirit of the Times," a paper printed in this village, on the 1st of September 1826, twelve days before Morgan's abduction. The article alluded to, was written about two weeks before its publication. Had the sentiments of the writer influenced the whole fraternity, Morgan, in all human probability, would now have been a resident of this village, and his book been forgotten. Some of the author's personal friends, residing at a distance, may, perhaps, feel an interest in knowing what those sentiments were.—The article is therefore subjoined.

Mr. Editor—I did not originally intend to have opened my lips on a subject which at present seems to agitate the public mind—much less to have given publicity to my reflections through the columns of a newspaper. I need not, it is presumed, inform you, that I allude to the subject of *freemasonry*. The indiscreet conduct of some of its friends—the unheard-of asperity of its enemies, and a recent perusal of our village papers for the last two weeks, have induced me, however much against my wishes, to appear in your columns, not to rescue masonry from the *destruction* which awaits it, but to rescue the character of our village from indelible disgrace.

Some time ago, a pretended member of the fraternity announced in bar-rooms and elsewhere, his intention to publish the secrets of masonry. Not because he had been injured, but in order to repair a broken fortune, and if possible, barter his fidelity and his oath for money. Some of the masons it appears, took alarm. But why, or wherefore, no one it is believed, can satisfactorily tell—at all events, nothing could have been more indiscreet, and at the same time, more unnecessary. The lion might as well have been alarmed because an army of kites or crows, had threatened to invade his proud domains.

The attempt has often been made before, and as often proved abortive. No man in his sober senses, can, for a moment, credit the perjured wretch, who commences his career by the publication of his infamy. Hence, all the efforts of debased and degraded men, have hitherto, in attempts of this kind, as might have been foreseen, terminated in disgrace, even with those upon whose credulity they relied for countenance and support.

Masonry has continued to flourish. It has pervaded almost every portion of the habitable globe, and extended its salutary influence to the distressed in every clime— unnerved the warrior's arm on the shores of our inland seas, and converted the uplifted tomahawk's sanguinary blow into a fraternal embrace. Even the mighty Tecumseh felt its influence, and amid the carnage of battle, the groans of expiring victims, and the cries of savage torture, stept from his ranks to save a fallen foe—because he was a brother. And well it may—free masonry regards no man for his worldly wealth or riches. 'Tis therefore the internal, and not the external qualifications which we cherish and admire—the hand that grasps the spade, and the hand that wields the sceptre, are equally entitled to our friendly grip. "No matter whether an African or an Indian sun may have burned upon him—no matter in what disastrous battle his liberties may have been cloven down"—no matter if, like Lazarus, he has lain at the rich man's gate, and the dogs have licked his sores, the moment he enters a lodge of free and accepted masons, the distinctions of wealth, of rank, and of power, flee before him, and he finds himself among friends and brothers, ready to assist, defend and protect him—not, however, unless his conduct adorns his profession: for among masons, as well as among christians, it is admitted that many unworthy members have found acceptance. 'Tis owing, however, not to a defect in the institution itself, but to that frailty from which none can claim exemption. Let it not then excite surprise, that an institution, almost co eval with time, and coextensive with the habitations of our race, should, among her Washingtons, her Franklins, and her hosts of patriots and

sages, have included men whose lives and whose conduct have digraced the name, and dishonoured the profession, of masons; let it rather excite our wonder, that it has shed so many brilliant rays amid surrounding gloom—that it has so often cheered "the poor and weary pilgrim, travelling from afar,"—that distress ne'er entered its portals, or was driven "pennyless" away.

Why, then, should the world desire its destruction?—We seek no contest with the throne, or the altar—we ask no assent to political or religious dogmas—we solicit no converts to our cause:—based on the principles of immutable *justice* —supported by "Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty," it will endure till the "last syllable of recorded time."

Ferdinand, to be sure, who now disgraces the Spanish throne, by a legal mandate, has closed our doors—despotick Russia has followed his example. They might, however, as well have undertaken to arrest the progress of time, or resist the Niagara's foaming torrent. Only "let our light so shine before men, that they, seeing our good works, may glorify our Father, which is in heaven," and our standards will rise majestick on every hill, and "holiness to the Lord" echo through every vale. The efforts recently made to discover our secrets, were they even successful, will vanish like mists before the rising sun.

I was asked no longer ago than yesterday, whether an institution, liable to impression from such instruments as have recently been employed to effect its destruction, is really worth preserving? The world at large, I am aware, will answer in the negative, and masons themselves be compelled, at last, to join in the same accents.

The idea, then, that masonry is susceptible of the least impression, from causes to which I have alluded, after having survived the storm of ages—the power of despots, and the pride of rulers, is not to be tolerated for a single moment; and that brother, who can for an instant, conceive so ungenerous a thought, does, by his own example, inflict a more deadly wound than all its enemies, and is unworthy of a place within its walls.

The man who should discharge a handful of mud at the sun in its meridian, with a view to arrest its course, or extinguish its beams, would act as rationally as he who should publish the secrets of our order, in expectation of injuring our cause. In the one case, he might, perhaps, for a moment, pollute the atmosphere within his limited circle, and probably draw down on his guilty head, a filthy and corrupted shower—and in the other, violate his oath, sacrifice his duty to his friends and his God, and at last, to crown the scene, receive the reward which a depraved world never fails to bestow on acknowledged guilt, and masonry still survive.—Masonry is seated on a rock, inaccessible to all the malice of man. The thunder, even of royal indignation, rolls beneath its feet—the lightnings of popular fury flash at her portals, and are seen no more. She there surveys a world of misery and woe: arrests the progress of many a tear down sorrow's visage; she there bids her votaries go forth—aid and assist the widow and the orphan, wherever dispersed around the globe—soothe the unhappy—sympathize with their misfortunes—alleviate their distresses, and pour the balm of comfort into their troubled minds. She then descends into the vale below—takes every child of humility and sorrow by the hand, and in a voice that thrills through every nerve, bids them, "arise, sad virtue, and rejoice."

Can it be possible, that an institution, founded on such a base will, like a reed, be shaken by every wind—that it will like the aspen, tremble at every blast: rather expect, that, "like fabled Atlas,

> When storms and tempests thunder on its brow,
> And ocean breaks her billows at its feet,
> 'Twill stand unmoved, and glory in its height."

A BROTHER.

The above article, it will be recollected, was written at a time when the masonick intitution stood higher, perhaps, than at any former period.

CHAPTER IV.

Circumstances preceding Morgan's Abduction continued—Meeting in Batavia on the night of the 8th of September, 1826—Attempt to burn Miller's Office.

THE object of Miller and Morgan, in publishing the contemplated work, being, as it was suposed, entirely mercenary, and emanating wholly from a desire on their part, to gratify the worst of passions, some inconsiderate members of the masonick fraternity, it appears, concerted, in evil hour, a plan for its suppression. A more rash, foolish, and impolitick measure was never devised. Had Miller and Morgan been left to themselves—had the book been printed without any efforts to prevent it—and had the masons manifested no anxiety whatever, on the occasion, it would have fallen of its own weight, still born, from the press; and the author, and publisher, as such, never been heard of more. Masonry, however, it seems, as well as religion, was destined to have its officious and intermeddling champions.

On the 8th of September, 1826, at night, a party of between forty and fifty, assembled in Batavia, for the avowed purpose of breaking into Miller's office, and procuring, by force, the manuscript papers, prepared by Morgan, for the press, which it was then supposed, were partly in type, and partly in printed sheets, nearly ready for distribution.

The history of this extraordinary convocation, is derived from the affidavit of one Thomas G. Greene, a journeyman carpenter, of Buffalo, who, it appears, was one of their number, and a commander of divi-

sion. The affidavit was prepared by a member of the Lewiston Committee, and sworn to by Green when under arrest, on a charge for murder,* and afterwards published in the Appendix to the report of said Committee.

This motley assemblage, composed of individuals who were strangers to each other, having probably learnt that Miller's office was guarded, and being unwilling to expose their lives in so foolish an undertaking, dispersed at the dawn of day without attempting to effect their object.

Some of their number, however, it seems were not satisfied with the result of their expedition to Batavia on the night of the 8th, for on the night of the 10th of September, an effort it appears was made to consume by fire the same offices, which a want of cour-

* In justice to Green, we ought, perhaps, here to state, that on leaving Buffalo, which he did sometime in 1827, he commenced labour upon the High School House in the county of Monroe, at which place he was arrested for the murder of Morgan, by virtue of a warrant issued in Genesee County, upon the complaint of a person in Erie County, for a murder committed, as pretended, in Niagara County. Instead, however, of being taken before the magistrate in Monroe county, who had indorsed the warrant, or into the county of Niagara where the offence was alleged to have been committed, and where only, he could have been tried, he was brought directly to Genesee county—confined for a number of days—and at last discharged without an examination, no circumstances appearing against him calculated to excite any suspicion whatever of his guilt He afterwards brought actions of false imprisonment against those who arrested and detained him, and obtained verdicts. They have since been carried up to the Supreme Court, and are now pending there. Green's conduct was so justily reprehensible on account of his participation in the transactions which occurred at Batavia on the night of the 8th of September, that he recovered for his arrest and imprisonment in one case only $15, and in the other, only nominal damages and costs.

age, or as it is hoped, which reflection and repentance had prevented them, on the night of the eighth, from attempting to pull down and destroy.

Miller at that time occupied the upper part of two buildings in a compact part of the village, separated only by a narrow lane—stairs on the outside of each led to his apartments. On Sunday night, (Sept. 10th 1826,) the village was alarmed by the cry of fire. It was however, soon extinguished,* and on the following morning its citizens were so unwilling to believe it to have been the work of an incendiary, that, had not the act, base as it was, been followed by others of equal or perhaps greater atrocity, the publick would unquestionably at this day have remained in doubt, whether the fire had not been kindled by the agency of Miller or his friends, not for the purpose of consuming them, but for the purpose of exciting interest and compassion. Subsequent events, however, soon dispelled the illusion and convinced every impartial mind, that injustice would have been done to col. Miller by entertaining so ungenerous a thought.

Remains of straw, and cotton balls saturated with

* Some teamsters who had arrived in the night for loads of flour at Mr. Evans' mill, in order to carry them to the canal, being unable to procure their loading at so early an hour, and unable also to procure lodging, had taken up their abode for a short time in a publick stage standing in the highway near Miller's Office. The fire aroused them. They repaired to the spot, and by the aid of water standing in some barrels under the eaves of the same building, extinguished it immediately. The facilities for extinguishing fire, afforded as in this case, by water under the eaves, and by persons so near at hand, induced many for a short time to suppose, that there was some concert between those who had kindled and those who extinguished it. It appears, however, from subsequent statements, that the water under the eaves, and the persons in the stage, were there by accident.

spirits of turpentine, were found under the stairs—the sides of the buildings had been partially smeared with that liquid—a short brush was also found, which had evidently been dipped in turpentine, and not far distant a dark lantern.

Thus it would seem that a design to burn Miller's office had been formed by some miscreants,*—that preparations for that purpose had been made with great deliberation—and that its execution was prevented as it were by accident.

A warrant was afterwards issued on the oath of John Mann, at the instance of some members of the Lewiston Committee, against one Richard Howard of Buffalo, and given to Lorton Holden, one of the constables of the town of Batavia, for execution. Mr. Holden was directed by those at whose instance the warrant had been issued, to call upon Thomas C.

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* A reward of $100 dollars was afterwards offered by some gentlemen of the Masonic fraternity residing in Batavia, for the discovery and conviction of the author of this daring outrage. The notice was as follows:

"WHEREAS, it is alleged that the Printing Office of David C. Miller, in this village, was set on fire in the month of September now last past, supposed to be the work of some incendiary.—And whereas, no reward has hitherto been offered for the apprehension and conviction of the said incendiary. And whereas, a regard for public justice, individual security, and violated law requires, that the offender or offenders be brought to condign punishment.—Now therefore, in order to effect so desirable an object, the undersigned have thought proper to offer a reward of ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS, to be paid on the conviction of said offender. Dated at Batavia, Genesee co. N. Y. this 7th day of March 1827. Signed, *William Seaver Jr. Henry Brown, Ebenezer Mix, Frederick Follett. D. H. Chandler, S. Cumings, Richard Dibble, H. Tisdale, Silas Finch, Wm. R. Thompson. D. Tisdale, Samuel Graves, John Cotes, David Danolds, J. Chatfield, B. Blodgett, Nahum Loring, J. S. Ganson, E. Towner, John Foot.*

Love, Esq. an active and efficient anti-mason of Buffalo, and now First Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of the County of Erie, who, in the language of the Report of the Lewiston Committee, "chose to call in to his aid four others," of whom it is said the Hon. Albert H. Tracy, his law partner, was one, all of whom advised Mr. H. not to execute the warrant. He of course returned without effecting the object for which he had been sent thither. Nathan Townsend, at that time an active and vigilant public officer of the County of Genesee, was immediately thereafter sent to Buffalo, with positive directions to arrest Howard at all events, but found on his arrival there that Howard had fled on the 10th of March, the next day after Messrs. Love, Tracy and others, had advised Mr. Holden not to arrest him. That Mr. Love and his friends were actuated by the best of motives and the purest intentions in the advice they gave, no one acquainted with either will pretend to deny. Still it is equally evident, that their advice was not only indiscreet, but that it afforded an opportunity for the accused to escape, and of course occasioned thereafter, (without so intending it,) much abuse against masons because Howard who was one of their number, had escaped that punishment which it was supposed he merited.

Howard is a foreigner by birth—a journeyman book-binder by trade, and has not, it is believed, been heard of since he left Buffalo.

Strong circumstances of suspicion are said to exist against him, sufficient probably, to have convicted him had he been arrested. It is therefore to be regreted that justice could not have had its course. It

is also to be regreted that Mr. Love and his friends should have suffered in the publick estimation, for having been accessary to his escape, (as intimated in the Report of the Lewiston Committee,) when it is presumed they were actuated by the purest of intentions.

John Mann, at the time of making the complaint against Howard, was unquestionably deranged, and that fact is now universally admitted by all who knew him in his life time.

Without expressing any opinion in relation to Howard's innocence or guilt,* we shall leave that subject for the present, and conclude by repeating our regret that he could not have been brought to a publick trial.

CHAPTER V.

Morgan's arrest in Batavia for Petit Larceny—His trial at Canandaigua—Is acquitted—and afterwards committed to jail for debt—Trial of Howard, Seymour and others, for arresting him.

In May 1826, Morgan, while at Canandaigua, borrowed of one Kingsley, a tavern keeper in that village, a shirt and cravat which he promised to return shortly thereafter. Having neglected or violated his promise in that particular, a warrant was issued on the complaint of Kingsley, by Jeffery Chipman, Esq. one of the Justices of the Peace of the county of Ontario, a-

* We are unable to ascertain the nature of the evidence upon which the charge is predicated.

gainst him (Morgan) for petit larceny. This warrant was delivered to one Halloway Hayward, a constable in Canandaigua, to be executed according to law.

On the morning, of the 10th of September 1826, Hayward in company with others, started for Batavia with a view to arrest said Morgan, and arrived there some time in the evening. On his way thither he procured the warrant issued as aforesaid, to be indorsed by a Justice of the Peace residing at Le Roy, in Genesee county. On the morning of the 11th, Hayward called at the house of said Morgan in the village of Batavia, took him aside and informed him of the warrant and of his directions. Morgan without making any objections whatever, immediately repaired to Danolds' tavern in said village, and breakfasted with Hayward and his friends. Soon afterwards, and while he was in custody of the officer, Col. Miller, one of his bail for the limits, called at Danolds' and interposed an objection to his (Morgan's) being taken off the limits, on account of the liability which he and others as bail would thereby incur.—Hayward, however, insisted, that as his process was in behalf of the people, he had a right to arrest him and take him to Canandaigua for trial. Morgan himself made no objections and voluntarily entered the carriage. The party then proceeded.

On arriving at Le Roy, Hayward offered to take him before the Justice by whom the warrant had been indorsed, that he might give bail for his appearance, (if he thought proper) at the next court of General Sessions of the Peace, to be held in the County of Ontario. Morgan however, declined the

acceptance of this offer, and alleged as a reason for so doing, that he could convince Kingsley, the prosecutor, on seeing him, that although he had in his possession the shirt and cravat in question, he did not intend to steal them.

Morgan's arrest in Batavia was without any force or violence, and did not at the time excite much interest or attention.

On arriving at Canandaigua he was taken before the Justice (Jeffrey Chipman, Esq.); an examination was had, and it appearing that Morgan came lawfully in possession of the property alleged to have been stolen, that is, by a loan from Kingsley himself, no felony could of course have been committed, and he was therefore, immediately discharged.

After his discharge he was arrested for a small debt due to one Aaron Ackley, another tavern keeper in the village. A judgement was confessed thereon, and an execution issued, by virtue of which he was arrested and committed to jail.

Henry Howard, Harris Seymour, Moses Roberts, Joseph Scofield, and some others who accompanied Hayward the constable from Canandaigua to Batavia, at the time of Morgan's arrest, were afterwards indicted, tried and acquitted.

An action was also brought against the Sheriff of Genesee county for the escape of Morgan, which has since been tried and a verdict found for the defendant. The bail, Col. Miller and others, are of course discharged.

The trial of Howard, Seymour and others, having been the subject of much popular clamour, demands at this time a few passing remarks.

That the warrant by virtue of which Morgan was arrested had been regularly issued, no one it is believed, pretends to deny. There was, however, unquestionably in the manner of its execution, something exceptionable—not in Morgan's arrest, or in his transportation to Canandaigua for trial, for that seems to have been his wish—but in procuring, if such was the case, so many to accompany him thither.

Had Morgan remained in jail, or been restored to his family, this circumstance would not have excited the least attention. Subsequent events however, gave it an importance which otherwise it never would have received, and exposed the actors therein to suspicions and prosecutions, alarming in their nature and serious in their consequences. The intelligence and integrity of judges regardless of popular clamour, and of jurors attentive to the law and evidence, and observant of their duty and their oaths, however, saved them from unjust and ignominious punishment; and proclaimed to the world in a language which cannot be mistaken that, to have been suspected or to have been implicated in the abduction of Morgan, or in a conspiracy to arrest without reasonable cause, and imprison or convict him for petit larceny, has not in every case, and under every circumstance, been conclusive evidence of guilt.*

* A letter recently published in the appendix to the report of the Select Committee in the Assembly, on that part of the Governor's Message relating to the abduction of William Morgan, written by Bowen Whiting, Esq. District Attorney of Ontario County, to the Chairman of said committee, states among other things, "that Cheesebro testified upon the trial of Howard and others, that there was no understanding between him and them, of any thing to be done to Morgan other than the bringing him to Canandaigua and

No connexion has ever been traced between the persons who arrested Morgan in Batavia, and those who subsequently took him from the jail in Canandaigua and carried him westward, (with the exception of Cheesebro, who, it appears, was concerned in both) nor is it believed that any such connexion ever existed; nor has it ever been pretended that the former designed to imprison or destroy him. If so, why did they offer to take him before the Justice in Le Roy where he was well acquainted, and could have procured bail in abundance; and had he done so, would thereby have been rescued from their grasp. The fact unquestionably is, that Morgan, finding himself an object of suspicion, and feeling conscious, if not of guilt, at least of a great neglect of moral duty, wished to see his accuser; and as he was about becoming an author, and expected shortly to be the master of untold thousands, desired an opportunity to clear up his character, and therefore accompanied Hayward and others cheerfully to Canandaigua for that purpose.

The acquittal of Howard, Seymour and others, although it created for a short time no inconsiderable clamour in this vicinity, particularly among those who, as Cæsar says of Tully, "never follow any thing

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trying him." "That the idea of Morgan's going west originated here, (Canandaigua,) after his discharge from the warrant." Other circumstances confirm this statement.—Howard, Seymour and others, were therefore justly acquitted of participation in his abduction. In relation to that part of the charge against them, for conspiring to convict Morgan of Petit Larceny, the Court charged the jury that if they believed from the evidence, that there was a "reasonable or probable cause" of suspicion against Morgan for stealing, the defendants ought not to be convicted. The jury having acquitted them under such circumstances, we are not aware of any reason why the publick should complain.

which other men begin"—who are determined at all events never to be satisfied with any measures unless proposed by, or any thing unless it emanates from themselves : inasmuch as no evidence given or offered showed an intention on their part, either to carry him without the realm, or to convict him without cause of an offence committed within it, was unquestionably a triumph of justice and principle over prejudice and passion.

Could I with propriety be indulged in that particular, it would be my wish here to close, and having dropped a tear or two over the faults and follies of those who have thus far appeared on the stage, leave the residue of this narrative untold. The task, however, which I have assumed forbids. I shall therefore enter upon it, and accompany the ill fated Morgan to Fort Niagara, where it is said, (though upon questionable authority,*) he was confined by an officer of government, while the star spangled banner waved on its ramparts.

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* The authority for saying that Morgan was confined in Fort Niagara, is derived principally from the declaration and exparte affidavit of one Edward Giddings, the anti-masonick Almanack maker, who has rencently acquired considerable celebrity, particularly with the anti-masonick party. Giddins says, that he (Giddins) had charge of him during a part of the time he was so confined, and offered to swear to it upon the trial of Bruce. His testimony however, was decided unanimously by the Court, to be wholly inadmissible, on account of his atheism. As Mr. Giddins is destined probably to become conspicuous, and if to be believed, was guilty as an accessary to Morgan's death, and as the court have been severely censured for not altering the law (as it has been well understood for ages,) to suit the views of certain individuals, I have thought proper to insert a sensible and well written article upon the subject of his exclusion, from the Ontario Repository.

From the Ontario Repository.

Testimony of Giddins.—The exclusion of this individual from testifying in the case of Eli Bruce and others, has been a subject of much animadversion by the anti-masonick papers throughout the state. The decision of the court has been boldly arraigned and suspicion attempted to be cast upon its purity and impartiality. To men of intelligence, and who are acquainted with the character of the very respectable members of our common pleas' bench, and especially of the learned judge, who for so many years, and with such distinguished ability, uprightness, and impartiality, has presided over that court, an attempt to vindicate the correctness of that decision, and repel the imputations cast upon the character of the Court, may appear gratuitous and unnecessary; but the prevalence of a belief among a portion of the community, that the decision in question was in violation of the law and constitution of the state, requires that an effort be made to disabuse them of their erroneous, though honest prejudices on this subject.

In order to exhibit the *reason* of the exclusion of Giddins' testimony, it will be proper to advert for a moment to the *nature of an oath*. An oath is an appeal to God, as the moral Governour of the world, to witness the sincerity of what is about to be testified, and an imprecation of his vengeance upon the witness, if he does not testify truly. If therefore, the witness denies the existence of the Supreme Being, or does not believe that He will punish perjury, he cannot with any propriety be sworn. As an appeal to Heaven, an oath, in the cause of the individual supposed, is but solemn mockery; the Being whose notice of the act is invoked and whose vengeance upon perjury is imprecated, either does not exist, or is indifferent to the truth or falsity of what is to be testified. Whether under this view of the subject, Mr. Giddins should have been sworn, will appear from the testimony produced on the trial. And here we shall pass over that portion of it which was verbal, and direct the attention of the reader to the higher and more satisfactory evidence furnished by Giddins himself, in a written declaration of his opinions, deliber-

ately penned in the confidence of a private correspondence with an intimate friend. In a letter to David Morrison, dated the 10th of April, 1827, of great length, and as its whole scope and tenour indicates, written for the express purpose of giving a formal statement of the writer's religious creed, are the following, among many other coincident passages: "God has the same care of man as of an insect, of an insect as of a tree, of a tree as of a stone: With him there can be no difference or distinction between beauty and deformity, virtue and vice, perfection and imperfection. Prayers are but mockery to His name, and ought not to be encouraged." "All men can do, can not change Him; He is not susceptible of persuasion, and as relates to man, he is incapable of love or hatred." "This is my notion of virtue and vice; that that they do not refer to any future time, but relate altogether to man in his present state." "My views are not in accordance with the Bible, for that book represents the Deity as vindictive, revengeful, and inconsistent."

Such were the views of Mr. Giddins but a few months previous to the abduction of Wm. Morgan. By the testimony of Mr. Griffin and Mr. Weed, a declaration of his, last May, was proved, that "*his religious opinions were fixed, and that he had not changed them for years.* It was upon the evidence of this letter, that the court came to the unanimous decision, not to admit Mr. Giddins to his oath. Now if the competency of a witness requires a belief of the Divine cognizance of the acts of his creatures, and that he will punish false swearing, (a point which we supposed established, by unnumbered decisions, and the uniform and immemorial practice of courts in every civilized country,) then there can be no question but Edward Giddins was properly and legally rejected. The only question for the court to decide was, what was the law of the state as applicable to that case. With the policy or impolicy, the propriety or impropriety of the laws, they had nothing to do. If the principle, in any of its tendencies or applications, should be found prejudicial to individual rights, or subversive of the ends of justice, then it is incumbent on the legislature to provide a remedy. It is the

province of courts of justice, not to enact or change laws, but to declare and execute them as they actually exist. It is, however, deserving of serious consideration, whether the abrogation of this rule and the indiscriminate admission of witnesses denying moral responsibility, and insensible of the religious sanction of an oath, would not lead to consequences more dangerous than any which can result from the operations of the law as it now stands. It is only a sense of moral obligation and future retribution, which can make an oath what it has been fully termed, "the adamantine chain which binds the soul of man to the throne of eternal justice."

But it is said that by the rejection of this witness, the perpetrators of a flagrant outrage are to escape the punishment due to their crime. So, too, it might happen, that an individual convicted on record of larceny or perjury, might be the sole witness of a robbery or murder, and that if admitted to his oath, he would testify truly; and yet, as the law disallows the testimony of such a person, the highway robber or murderer must in that case go unpunished.

Many encomiums have been lavished upon the character of Mr. Giddins, who is held up to the publick as a paragon of integrity and moral worth. But what, upon his own showing, are his claims to such a distinction? He has proclaimed to the world a fact: that he was concerned in one of the most nefarious outrages that was ever perpetrated in a civilized community. The liberty and life of an injured fellow being were placed in his hands. Day after day he held the ill-fated Morgan confined in a dreary prison house, and heard unmoved the supplicating cries of his prisoner, for sympathy and deliverance. By simply turning a key he might have sent him forth to liberty and life. He might have had recourse to the civil authority, but he did not do it; the murderous tragedy is consummated, and long afterwards, when an outraged community come to make inquisition for the blood of their fellow, and an honest indignation is enkindled against the atrocious transaction, then, forsooth, this Mr. Giddins becomes the champion of a virtuous excitement! Instead of humbling himself "in sackcloth and ashes" before

that community whose most sacred rights he had outraged, he sets up for the leader of a party, and does not hesitate even to trumpet through almanacks and newspapers, the story of his own infamy, that he may speculate upon publick curiosity and excitement. The impropriety and injustice of thus giving publicity to the particulars of a transaction in reference to which he then expected to be a witness against his associates in a crime, thereby inflaming the feelings of the publick against the accused, and leading them to prejudge the cause upon ex-parte statements, must be obvious to every one; and the conduct of Mr. Giddins, whether considered in reference to the sordid motives which actuate it, or the relation in which he stands to all the parties, deserves unmixed and most decided reprobation.

CHAPTER VI.

Morgan's Abduction.

The next morning after Morgan was committed to jail as already stated. one Loton Lawson, who has since been indicted, tried and convicted. for participating in his abduction, paid the small debt in favor of Ackley and procured Morgan's discharge. At the time of his release from prison, a carriage, prepared it seems for that purpose, was waiting at the door, into which Morgan, notwithstanding his resistance, was thrust with violence and driven directly to Rochester. The persons who rode in the carriage thither, are still unknown. It is in evidence, however, that the carriage was hired and paid for by Nicholas G. Chesebro. Chesebro and Lawson, together with Edward Sawyer and John Sheldon, were afterwards indicted for participating in this transaction.--

Chesebro, Sawyer and Lawson plead guilty to their indictments—Sheldon traversed his—was tried—unjustly convicted, and together with Chesebro, Sawyer and Lawson, subsequently imprisoned.* Neither Chesebro, Sawyer nor Sheldon, left Canandaigua. Morgan of course must have fallen into other hands. The precise manner in which he was conveyed from thence to the vicinity of Fort Niagara, has never been ascertained; nor has it positively been proved that he was conveyed thither. Circumstances, however, which in many cases are equally conclusive with positive proof, and often more so, leave no doubt of the fact.

It seems, therefore, to be established beyond controversy, that Morgan left the jail in Canandaigua, of his own free will—that immediately thereafter, he became suspicious of a design upon his person and made an alarm—that he was thereupon seized, thrust by force into a carriage waiting at the door for his reception—and, in defiance of his wishes, and in opposition to his will, conveyed to the ferry near Fort Niagara.

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* Lawson was imprisoned in the county jail for two years—Chesebro for one year—Sheldon for three months—and Sawyer for one. The want of severity in their several punishments having, in the estimation of some, exposed the court to much censure, it is but justice here to remark, that no law at that time, made the kidnapping of a white man any thing more than a misdemeanor at common law, punishable by fine and imprisonment. Besides, from the evidence adduced, and the exculpatory affidavits afterwards made and filed, it is not to be inferred that either of the defendants were concerned in any subsequent acts of violence, nor is it to be presumed that any thing else was intended by Morgan's abduction, than to produce a separation between him and Miller, and thereby prevent the publication of the contemplated book.

That the forcible seizure of Morgan, without any pretence of authority, and his subsequent conveyance westwardly by force, was a gross and violent outrage which can neither be justified or palliated by any legal, moral, religious or masonick principles, no one, unless he be lost to a sense of right and wrong, can ever deny. The conviction and imprisonment therefore of Lawson, Chesebro, Sawyer and Sheldon, with the exception of the latter, (and as to him it is doubtful whether he did not, for his foolish and improper conduct afterwards, deserve all that he suffered,) was imperiously required, and in itself was a triumphant vindication of the law against aspersions, which day after day salute our ears in every part of the "infected territory," that no mason, however guilty, can be punished, so long as the court or jury, or any part of either are masons.

The moral guilt of those convicted depends on a variety of circumstances. It is a rule of law, fortified by the dictates of our Holy Religion, and supported by every principle of common sense and reason, that in all criminal cases, the intention with which an act is done constitutes the sole criterion of its guilt.—Hence, if one man kills another in defending himself, it is justifiable. If he does it by accident, it is in law excusable—and if with premeditated malice, it is murder. If Morgan, then, was conveyed to the Niagara frontier, (as by some is pretended) for the purpose of being sacrificed to masonick vengeance, then all who participated in conveying him thither, if such was their intention and he was in fact there murdered, are guilty of murder. If he was carried there for the purpose of being delivered to the masons in Canada,

(as appears from Giddins' statement,) or to Brant and his associates, or to be put on board of a British vessel and sent to parts unknown, then those who participated, though guilty of a heinous offence in the sight of God and man, are not guilty of murder, whatever may have been his fate.

That he was conveyed more than a hundred miles through a well settled country, at great risk and expense, for the purpose of being murdered in a particular place, is too absurd to be for a moment credited. It is said, though I am not aware on what authority, that Morgan, during the whole of this route was kept constantly drunk. If so, it can hardly be supposed that those who had him in charge, if they had originally intended to have murdered him at last, would have called in so many to their aid. It could have been done as well and with less danger of detection, without their interference—besides, Chesebro and Sawyer, both of whom are men of unquestionable veracity, have sworn, that the only object in carrying off Morgan, was to produce a separation between him and Miller, and thereby "prevent the publication of what Morgan himself alleged he was under solemn obligations never to reveal." Subsequent circumstances developed by the Lewiston Committee, and the statements of Giddins, if entitled to any credit, fortify this conclusion. It must therefore be conceded that no violence was at first intended, and that if Morgan afterwards perished by some murderer's arm, it was the result of circumstances which those guilty of his abduction neither contemplated nor foresaw.

Among the efforts made to excite the publick to deeds of vengeance, it has often been reported,

and indeed affidavits to that effect have frequently been published and read, with an interest hitherto unexampled in this community, that Morgan, on his arrival at Fort Niagara, was tried by a sort of Council and sentenced to death—that he was afterwards executed by having his throat cut, his tung torn out, and buried in the sands of the lake or river—that previous to his execution he desired a Bible, and a short time for its perusal, both of which were refused —and no circumstance relating to the subject now under review, has ever created so much sensibility, or called forth so much indignation.

"Morgan's Immolation" in the manner above pretended, has also been exhibited on canvass, to the admiring eyes of thousands.*

It has also been stated, with great confidence, that he was taken to the frontier in order that he might be delivered to Capt. Brant, a son of the celebrated Indian Chief, distinguished for his cruelties and bravery during our Revolutionary war, and that Brant was sent for with a view to Morgan's sacrifice according to the rules of savage vengeance. Capt. Brant, however, in a letter, denies that he ever heard of Morgan till he saw his name in a New-York paper connected with his own, and no one acquainted with Capt. Brant, will for a moment doubt the truth of his assertion.†

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* The painting above alluded to by Cooley, a seceding mason of Le Roy, is now advertised to be seen at Albany.—Price 12 1-2 cents. It was taken there for exhibition a short time before the anti masonick State Convention.

†*To the Editor of the York (U. C.) Observer*—

SIR—I have just read a paragraph in the N. Y. Spectator of the 17th inst. wherein it is stated, that the fraternity

Notwithstanding the pertinacity with which the above reports for a long time were circulated, the illusion has finally vanished, and their falsehood is now conceded by all. Morgan's fate, however, is yet uncertain. "Clouds and darkness" still rest upon it. It is, and perhaps will be for years, a subject of regret, that the precise facts in relation to his final disposition near fort Niagara, have not been, and cannot certainly be known.

Giddins, whose statements, unless confirmed by other circumstances, are not entitled to any credit whatever--who was himself an accomplice, and if to be believed, the most guilty one of the whole, as will by and bye appear, informs us that Morgan arrived at his house, "bound, hoodwinked and under guard," on the night of the 13th of September, 1826--that he, (Giddins,) arose, partly dressed himself—went down to the river and assisted in rowing him and others across--that they waited about two hours in expectation that the masons in Canada would take him off their hands—" that they were not yet ready"--and therefore that Morgan was taken back and confined in the Magazine--that he, Giddins, had the key and supplied him during the time of his imprisonment

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at Niagara, had sent for me to receive and sacrifice the unhappy Morgan, of whom so much has been lately spoken.

You will oblige me by contradicting this report, which is wholly false. Neither in that instance, nor in any other, has such a barbarous proposal been made to me, nor do I believe that a man exists who would have dared to wound my feelings in such a heinous manner.

I know nothing of the man, nor of any transaction relating to him; and I am much surprised that my name has been called in question. I am, Sir, Yours respectfully,

J. BRANT.

Wellington Square, 24th Feb. 1827

with food--that Morgan became uneasy and made considerable disturbance--that a black woman who went with the keeper's little girl to the river for water, heard a noise in the magazine and communicated the fact to Giddins--that he, Giddins, in order to deceive her, mentioned that ghosts and witches infested the fort, and went unperceived by her to the top of the mess-house and made a similar noise—that a number of masons on the evening of the 14th. took supper at his house, most of whom, however, went away soon thereafter--that he, Giddins, and some others, after they had retired, held a long consultation about Morgan, and agreed that he ought to be executed--that he had forfeited his life, and that they, as masons, were bound to execute him--that they, with the exception of one or two others went into the magazine--that they afterwards returned, held a further consultation, and came to the same conclusion--that it was then proposed to take Morgan into the river and sink him with a stone, and we, says Giddins, "did all consent to the same, and moved some distance towards the magazine for that purpose." One, however, (not Giddins,) lagged behind and said he could not sanction the deed. This gave another of the company courage to make a similar declaration, "and the thing was abandoned for that time." Thus it will be seen from Giddins' own statements, that he was himself the first and foremost in guilt. Giddins further states, that he afterwards desired the release of Morgan, and that a quarrel between him and others arose out of this circumstance--that he, Giddins, however, at its close, gave the key of the magazine to his antagonist, whose

views he knew were hostile to his release*—that he, Giddins, afterwards, on the 17th, went away upon business and did not return till the 21st, at which time he found Morgan gone. The relations of Giddins in regard to what passed between the 17th and 21st, are therefore to be considered only as the hearsay declarations of an accomplice in guilt, whose testimony, on account of his disbelief in a God and a future state of rewards and punishments, is inadmissible in a court of justice. Giddins' statements, however, so far as they are confirmed by circumstantial evidence, are entitled to credit. The imprisonment of some person for instance, in the magazine, is confirmed by other testimony, and it is probable that this person was William Morgan. Giddins, by way of apology for assenting to Morgan's death, at first, states, that he considered himself bound by his masonick duty so to do. His sense of masonick duty was precisely such as it is reasonable to suppose a professed atheist would have, and his conduct on that occasion such as might have been anticipated from one, who denied all future accountability. We therefore can readily believe him when he speaks of things in relation to himself, because the confessions of the most hardened wretches on earth in such cases are evidence, but when he undertakes to state the opinions or relate

* If Giddins, as he pretends, desired the release of Morgan, having the key in his possession, the object could easily have been effected. He had only to turn that key and Morgan would have been restored to liberty. He chose, however, as he says, at the termination of a quarrel which arose out of Morgan's forlorn condition, to give the key to a man whose views he knew were hostile to his release—a most singular and extraordinary mode of evincing his sincerity.

the acts of others, the same rule does not apply, and then his declarations require confirmation.*

Notwithstanding then, all the light which has been

* If Giddins is to be credited, he must have been one of the most heartless, cold blooded villains in existence. Take for instance, his relation of that part of the transaction which succeeded Morgan's arrival at the ferry on the night of the 13th of September 1826. I quote his own words. "A man sat in front of him, (Morgan,) with a pistol in his hand ready to shoot him if he made any resistance. Morgan attempted to put his hand into his vest pocket, but the cord with which his arms were tied prevented him from doing so, and he said to me, (Giddins,) my friend, have the goodness to put your hand into my vest pocket and take out a quid of tobacco."—Again, "he, Morgan, was immediately interrupted by the person who sat in front of him, who said, as he presented a pistol, silence you damned rascal, or I will shoot you in a minute, no more of your preaching." Again, after this, Morgan made another attempt to speak, but before he could articulate a single phrase, this man bore a pistol against his breast apparently with some force, and said to him, "do you feel that," "I do," said Morgan, "well" resumed this man, "if you attempt to speak another word you are a dead man." Morgan was then silent after uttering a groan. Such is Giddins' statement of a transaction in which he, (Giddins,) participated. It took place too in Giddins' own boat, on the Niagara River in the night, when "there was no eye to pitty, and no arm to save." He was voluntarily there aiding and assisting, and afterwards became, as he says, Morgan's jailer. Now this statement is either true or false—if false, Giddins has only lied—if true, he stands convicted on his own confession, of one of the most heartless, guilty, corrupt and depraved acts hitherto presented for the detestation of mankind; still he has the effrontry, instead of humbling himself in dust and ashes, to present himself before this community as an object for its applause—and what is stranger still, that community appears to listen with eagerness to his tales, and have since exalted a man who, in the silent hour of midnight, looked calmly on and saw a helpless fellow being thus wantonly abused, and that too, without extending to him either relief or pity, into a saint and a patriot. Well may an indignant publick complain that "Morgan's Ghost walks unavenged among us," so long as Giddins, with all his guilt upon him, is permitted to stalk forth with impunity, at noon day, and without even a show of repentence, to publish his deeds to the world, and to profit by his own depravity.

thrown upon this transaction by two years of laborious investigation--notwithstanding the revelation of Giddins and of others, the fate of Morgan is still as doubtful as before. We are therefore left to form our opinion upon this subject from probabilities more than from any direct or positive proof which has yet been adduced.

That Morgan was conveyed to the Niagara Frontier, for the purpose of being taken across that ill fated river, and not to be drowned in it, cannot, after considering the evidence which has been brought to bear upon that point, reasonably be denied. The only question then, remaining for discussion, is, whether that intention was afterwards carried into effect, or whether, by the intervention of subsequent circumstance, he became the victim of force, of fraud or of violence.

Without pretending to give an opinion of my own, (for it must be confessed great difficulties meet us in arriving at a conclusion on either hand) I shall repeat the arguments adduced by the advocates in favour of each position, and leave my readers to judge for themselves as reason and inclination, as prejudice and passion shall dictate.

Those whose importance is derived in a great measure from the publick's belief in Morgan's death, having abandoned their first position in relation to his sacrifice at the fort, by having his throat cut, his tongue torn out and buried in the sands of the lake or river, now contend that he was taken out in an open boat, and by the aid of weights attached to his legs and arms, sunk to rise no more. In support of this position, some loose declarations of individual masons, are ad-

ded. His long and continued absence is also urged; and this, I must confess, seems, at first, conclusive. In reply, however, it is argued that, had Morgan been sunk with weights, as pretended, his body must unavoidably have been found by those who afterwards, with so much deserved zeal, industry, and perseverance, raked the river and lake, weeks and months for that purpose.

It has also been urged as a reason why the body was not discovered, that Morgan was drowned without such weights appended, and might have been driven by the current, into the lake.

In reply, it is said, if such was the case, he would shortly have risen; for it is a well established fact, that the body of a person who has been drowned, becomes buoyant in a little time, and rises and floats on the surface. The body of Timothy Munroe, for instance, mistaken by some honest, and by many designing men, for Morgan's, which was afterwards found on the shore of lake Ontario, and there reclaimed, as if by accident, from a watery grave, subsequently brought in solemn pomp, to the village of Batavia, and there interred, soon after it was deprived of life, rose and floated on the liquid element, till it was driven by the winds and the waves, into a friendly port.

Those whose interests and whose feelings are connected with the belief that Morgan is yet alive, contend with as great, and perhaps with greater plausibility, that Morgan was landed on the British shore, and that reasons, known only to himself, prevent his return.

The fact that his body has never been found, is

certainly a strong argument in favor of this position.—There was a time, when the inquiry "where is Morgan?" was in the mouth of every man, woman and child in this vicinity. Were the position to be assumed for a moment, that he was landed on the British shore, the inquiry, "why does he not return?" might, with equal propriety, be made, and perhaps admit of a no less difficult solution.

I will repeat, however, a few, not as my own, but as the answers of others, and leave their weight and importance, if any, to be estimated by the candid reader.

It is in the first place suggested, that fear may prevent it. It is not impossible that, having been exposed to one outrage, the apprehension of its repetition may have an influence.

In the second place, it is urged that, having been intemperate, for a long time, in his habits, and in consequence thereof, inattentive to his family—being held in but little estimation by community, and having no property except in his book, no object in particular would be attained by his return.

It is also in the third place suggested, that his return would prove entirely ruinous to his pretended friends. It cannot be presumed that he is detained in custody by masons, for of all men in the world, they are the most interested in his return. There is not, probably, among their number, a solitary individual, who cannot with perfect sincerity, repeat with James Fitz James, in the Lady of the Lake,

> "My finest Earldom would I give,
> Could I but bid Clan Alpine live."

No proposition is perhaps more evident, than that

his return would entirely prostrate the party that has grown up, been fostered, and is now sustained by a belief in his murder.

In the fourth place, a consciousness of having violated the most sacred pledges to his masonick friends, and a recollection of the favours which in times past, he had received at their hands, may perhaps have led him to suppose that his presence would be unwelcome. If, therefore, he could not fellowship with those whom he had betrayed, and his return would in all probability prove ruinous to those whom he had adopted, the question, "why he has not returned," is susceptible of an answer without supposing him murdered.

And in the last place, he may have gone to parts remote and not had time or opportunity to return, or may have died a natural death since his abduction. Whether the above reasons are conclusive or not, they deserve at all events some consideration.

It has frequently been suggested, that inasmuch as he was last seen in the company of masons, it is perfectly in their power to answer the above questions. And if those implicated could be sure, not only of impunity, as in the case of Giddins, but of rewards and honours, they would probably come forth and proclaim their infamy. It will, however, be recollected that but few can probably know, except from report, any thing about his fate, and those few being accomplices in guilt, can not perhaps, with safety confess their crime. It is therefore to be feared, that much time will yet elapse before the whole truth in regard to a transaction scarcely paralleled in the annals of iniquity, will be fully and correctly disclosed.

Goodall who published "Jachin and Boaz" many years ago, a book similar to Morgan's, and which has been on the shelves of almost every book store in our country since, was once a respectable man--a tallow chandler by trade, and Master of Queen's Arms Lodge, St Paul's Church Yard, London. Being reduced in his circumstances, he thereby became desperate, and in order to re-establish himself in business, wrote and published his book--his mysterious absence gave it currency, and edition after edition was sold at a guinea a copy. After an absence of two years he returned, and to ingratiate himself with the masons denied its authenticity. A fortune, however. of £100,000 had been acquired, and those interested in the work, threatened to prosecute him for fraud, when he fled, and finally died a vagabond in a foreign land.

CHAPTER VII.

Miller's arrest on the 12th of September 1826—Trial of French and others,

After the intentions of Miller and Morgan in relation to "the book," were publickly announced, one Daniel Johns from Canada, arrived in Batavia. He had resided for a short time in Rochester, and there become acquainted with Col. Miller's friends, by whom it is said he was recommended to Miller as a suitable partner. Johns had a little money and offered to make some advances--pecuniary and was at that time desirable. He was therefore without much

scrutiny as to his motives, in the language of the report "accepted and received into their confidence."

The object of Johns in the formation of this partnership, has never distinctly been ascertained. It is probable however, and circumstances since developed apparently justify the conclusion, that it was entirely different from that of Col. Miller. Johns unquestionably flattered himself with the idea of obtaining Morgan's manuscripts, and Miller with the idea of obtaining Johns' money. A deception was from the beginning therefore, intended, and subsequent disclosures inform us that it partially succeeded—Johns obtained a part of the manuscripts above alluded to, and Miller about thirty or forty dollars in cash. As the manuscripts, however, were of no value, Miller, it is admitted by all obtained an advantage—of this Johns was aware, but in endeavouring to coerce Miller into a more just and equitable distribution of the goods and chattels of the concern, involved himself and some of his friends in a series of difficulties.

A few days previous to Miller's arrest, a warrant in behalf of Johns was issued by a Justice of the Peace residing in Le Roy, against Miller and one John Davids, his partner, to collect the monies before that time advanced by Johns in the prosecution of their joint undertaking. This warrant, unfortunately for the officer, was placed in the hands of one Jesse French, a constable of the town of Stafford, for execution. French having been informed that Miller's office was guarded, and that he was determined at all events, to resist the service of any process whatever, employed it appears, a number of assistants and on the 12th of September 1826, accompanied by

those assistants, and followed by a large party, repaired to Batavia in order to effect Miller's and Davids' arrest. The presence of so many strangers without any apparrent business, excited on the part of its citizens the most fearful apprehensions. Early in the morning Col. Miller received a note from some person to him unknown, that an attempt would be made on that day to obtain by force, possession of the papers intended for publication. This note was submitted to the inspection of a few of the most respectable citizens in the village, some of whom were masons and their opinions desired. They, not supposing for a moment, that any set of men could be so rash and inconsiderate, as to attempt a measure so foolish in itself, and so impracticable in its execution, advised him to regard it as an idle rumour deserving of no attention. When, however, so many strangers without any ostensible business, appeared as if by concert, at the same time those who in the morning had advised Col. Miller to treat it as an idle rumour, began to fear that a plan concerted to obtain by force the papers in question, had previously been formed, and then awaited for its execution the orders only of some rash, inconsiderate leaders. The absence at this time of all the magistrates from the village, served to increase the above suspicions. A number armed with clubs immediately repaired to the vicinity of Miller's office, in order to be ready, should an attempt of that kind be made, to repel force by force. A number of the most respectable citizens, masons as well as others, tendered their services on the occasion to prevent a riot, which appearances for a short time indicated was about to commence. The

utmost anxiety was felt by all. Morgan had departed from Batavia on the preceding day, in the custody of an officer, and no intelligence of his destiny had yet been received. Apprehensions of the most alarming kind filled every bosom, and consternation was depicted on every face. The cloud, however, which hung with such portentous horror over the village at noon soon disappeared, and peace and quietness were shortly restored.

Soon after the citizens had assumed a defensive attitude, and while waiting in the immediate expectation of an attack upon Miller's office, French, accompanied by a single individual, repaired thither for the purpose of arresting Miller and Davids upon a civil process--the office fortified by "two swivels, fifteen or twenty guns, and five or six pistols," all of which were loaded, was at that time undefended, except by Miller, Davids and Miller's son. Wilcox, French's assistant first arrested Davids, who called for a pistol --French at the same time arrested Miller. Both submitted to the arrest, and were conducted by the officer and his attendant through an armed crowd of Miller's friends across the street to Danolds' tavern. Thirty or forty or perhaps fifty persons from whom the anticipated violence was feared, were there assembled. Orderly and quiet, they gave no indications of any hostility whatever, and satisfied those with whom they conversed, that no intention on their part existed, which ought to create the least alarm. Subsequent disclosures, however, render it evident that an intention, at least in the minds of some, had previously existed, to obtain even by force if necessary, the papers alluded to. This intention had been

communicated it seems, to some members of the fraternity residing in Batavia, all of whom condemned in the severest terms a measure fraught with mischief, conceived in folly, and ruinous in its consequences; and a messenger was immediately sent to Stafford to expostulate with the leaders of this misguided band, upon the folly, the depravity and total impracticability of their supposed design, and to urge upon them the necessity of prudence and forbearance. These expostulations had the desired effect and the intention was at once abandoned.

The absence of all the justices, (three in number,) was soon thereafter accounted for to the entire satisfaction of every candid man, (they having been subpœned to attend as witnesses, a trial in Bethany on that day,) and Miller's return from Le Roy whither he had been taken by the officer after his arrest, of course quieted for that time the publick mind.

The circumstances however, attending his arrest—the manner in which he was treated while in custody —the issue of the suit, and a variety of other circumstances, led many to inquire into the cause of these mighty preparations, and created strong suspicion that all was not right.

After Miller and Davids had been arrested and taken to Danolds' as already stated. Davids being a prisoner upon the limits and therefore not liable to be arrested and taken from thence by virtue of a civil process, was immediately, upon this fact being suggested by the Sheriff, discharged from custody. Miller was detained one or two hours, during which time his friends had access to him—counsel were sent for and a request made of some particular individuals, that

they would accompany him to Le Roy. He then departed in a waggon prepared by the constable for that purpose with others for Stafford, a little village six miles east of Batavia. The party which had accompanied or rather followed French to Batavia in the morning, were at this time returning home: these together with Miller's friends following in the rear, gave it an imposing appearance. At Stafford, Miller was taken into the Lodge Room and kept under guard for one or two hours, against the remonstrances of his counsel, who, together with a number of Miller's friends particularly desired by him to follow after, had in the mean time arrived and were admitted at their solicitation into the Lodge room without delay. The party now augmented by some additional force, then proceeded on to Le Roy, a village four miles still further east, where the Justice by whom the warrant in favour of Johns against Miller and Davids was issued, then resided. Miller was there desired to go into Hall's tavern which he refused to do, but went directly to the magistrate's in company with French, where he was put in the keeping of Wilcox and Hurlburt. French in the mean time, went out in pursuit of the plaintiff. The Justice was called upon soon afterwards by Miller's counsel to proceed, and after waiting about half an hour, no warrant having been returned, and neither constable or plaintiff appearing, Miller was discharged. He had scarcely left the office before French, accompanied by the plaintiff returned. French made one or two inaffectual attempts afterwards to arrest him a second time upon the same warrant. Miller's friends however, interfered and prevented him from so doing. Hol-

den, one of their number, a constable from Batavia, stated to French and others that Miller was a prisoner and in his custody. No further efforts were therefore made to detain him, and Miller thereupon, in the evening of the same day returned to Batavia.

An indictment was afterwards found against James Ganson, Jesse French, Roswell Wilcox and James Hurlburt, for an alleged riot, an assault and battery upon, and the false imprisonment of David C. Miller. A trial was had at the court of Oyer and Terminer held in April following, at Batavia in the county of Genesee, before the Hon. John Birdsall, circuit Judge, William H. Tisdale, James Taggert and Simeon Cummings, Esqrs. Judges of the court of Common Pleas of said county, two of whom are masons--a part of the jury were also masons. Ganson was acquitted—French, Wilcox and Hurlburt convicted and sentenced—French to twelve, Wilcox to six, and Hurlburt to three months imprisonment in the county jail.

The information received by French that Miller's office was defended by fire arms, would probably have justified him in the employment of reasonable assistance, had no further outrages succeeded. It can hardly be supposed however, that thirty or forty or perhaps fifty men, accompanied him to Batavia on that day for the purpose, nor can it for a moment be credited that such was in fact their only intention. We are therefore left to seek other and different reasons for this extraordinary assemblage, and I am not aware that any can be found, without supposing as already stated, that a design had previously been formed to obtain by force the papers in question--that the

plan so formed was abandoned in consequence of remonstrances from masons in the village—and that the party proceeded thither with a view to obtain some refreshments and the intention of returning immediately home. It would therefore seem, that the large party by which the officer was attended from Batavia to Stafford, and from thence to Le Roy, was more the result of accident than design. Millers detention for a short time in Batavia, was not in itself reprehensible, as it afforded him an opportunity to employ counsel and notify his friends that he was in difficulty and perhaps in danger. Had the intention of those concerned in this unfortunate affair been to carry off Miller, as by some is pretended, it is hardly possible to suppose that such an opportunity would have been afforded him. Besides there is no evidence that French was desired to proceed. His detention, however, in Stafford, admits of no apology. The manner too, in which he was treated while there with taunts and threats, cannot be sufficiently censured. The conviction and imprisonment of French and others was therefore a just and merited rebuke for their conduct on this occasion, and it is sincerely hoped that their influence will never cease, or their cause be forgotten. Ganson not having participated directly or indirectly in the arrest or imprisonment of Miller, and the intention for which the party it seems, had assembled, having been abandoned before its arrival to the scene of its intended operations, without doubt was deservedly acquitted.

An indictment against Ganson and others, for a conspiracy to procure said papers, in order to prevent their publication, has also been found, and it is

now pending in the supreme court of this state. Of that therefore, it is improper now to remark.

The mystery which preceded, accompanied and followed this transaction, from the commencement, by Miller's arrest in Batavia, to its final termination, by his discharge at Le Roy, and his subsequent return, has induced many to suppose that it was the intention of those with whom it originated, to have carried off Miller as well as Morgan. The facts in the case, and the circumstances by which it was attended, do not, howevever, justify that conclusion. An apparent mystery—a known and acknowledged wrong intention, and a palpable outrage, all occurring at the same time, and centering upon the same object, would be apt, in almost any case, but more especially in this, to induce a belief that other wrongs and injuries were reserved in store. Although it cannot for a moment be supposed, that this mighty preparation was all made with a view to Miller's and David's arrest upon a civil process, for a paltry debt of thirty or forty dollars—and although it is conceded that a design to obtain the papers in question is manifest throughout, and that Miller's and Davids' arrest under the semblance of law, was only a preparatory step to its accomplishment, we are not warranted in the belief that any further harm was ever intended.

The cases of Miller and Morgan, it will be recollected, were entirely different. The object to be effected by the removal of each, was equally so. Had the manuscripts been obtained, Miller's progress in the work must of course have been suspended, unless others could have been procured. The removal of Morgan beyond his reach, and the possession of his

manuscripts, it was unquestionably supposed, would effect their purpose. No object, therefore, could have been obtained by Miller's abduction.

The conclusion seems, therefore of course, to follow, that a design was formed by some rash, inconsiderate men, to obtain, in some way or other, the Morgan manuscripts. That in order to pave the way for its execution, Miller and Davids were to be first removed, apparently by legal process—that this intention was afterwasds abandoned, and before their arrival in the village—that to save appearances, Miller was arrested for debt, and taken to Le Roy—that in order to gratify the disappointed expectations, or perhaps, the natural propensities of some who, clothed, as it was supposed they were, with a little brief authority, derived from a warrant, felt power and forgot right, some of their number on the way to Le Roy,

> " Played such fantastick tricks before high heaven,
> As make the Angels weep,"

and finally, to close the scene, were afterwards justly convicted and severely punished.

CHAPTER VIII.

Meeting in Batavia subsequent to Morgan's abduction --Appointment of Committees--Gov. Clinton's Proclamation--Proceedings of Grand Chapter.

The aggressions on the part of masons terminate here. Having endeavoured in the preceeding chapters to elucidate the causes which led to Morgan's abduction--having traced the operation of those

causes step by step, to their final consummation—having shown, I trust, to the satisfaction of every impartial mind, that Morgan and Miller, without any patriotick motives, furnished the deluded actors in those scenes already described with a pretext for what they did, unjustifiable, impolitick and illegal, I admit—having exhibited to the publick view sufficient evidence I hope, to convince rational and impartial men, that all masons even in this vicinity did not participate in their deeds, or approve of their conduct—I shall now endeavour to ascertain the origin, trace the progress, and exhibit a true character of anti-masonry—to elicit the motives which first induced its leaders without cause, to outlaw and proscribe the innocent as well as the guilty—to anticipate the effects which their principles, their conduct and their policy, are calculated to produce on the morals, the happiness, the religion and the politicks of our common country—and finally to draw if posible, a fair comparison between the tendency of masonick and anti-masonick principles and duties, as taught and practised at the present day.

The mystery attending Morgan's departure—the circumstance of his not having been heard from—the meeting on the night of the 8th of September—the attempt to burn Miller's office—and the subsequent arrest of Miller on the 12th, excited in the publick mind so many suspicions, that a few individuals residing in Batavia, very justly and properly deemed an investigation necessary.

With a view to ascertain the circumstances in relation to Morgan's being taken from the jail in Canandaigua, rumours of which had as yet only reached

them, an agent was sent thither on the 22d of Sept. 1826. A number of affidavits were procured on the following day, which established beyound doubt the important fact, that Morgan was arrested in violation of law, after his discharge from prison on the 12th of September, and notwithstanding his opposition, conveyed from thence, in a carriage prepared for that purpose, by force, they knew not where.

Publicity given to the information thus acquired, served to increase still more the intensity of those suspicions. The thunder of popular indignation began to roll. It was however at first, in low and solemn murmurs. It emitted as yet no sparks, because no objects had yet been found on which its bolts could descend. The inquiry "where is Morgan," had appropriately been made and no answer been given. The citizens of the county of Genesee were therefore invited to meet in mass, at the Court House in Batavia, on the 4th of October, for the purpose of making some arrangements in order to ascertain his fate.

The meeting was numerously and respectably attended. It was a solemn and impressive scene. A citizen of this free land, entitled to the protection of its laws, had been taken by violence and confined, without authority, in some solitary place, or conveyed by force without the United States, to parts unknown, or had fallen beneath some murderer's arm, and no information relative to his destiny or his fate, had yet been received. The circumstance that he was poor—that he was dissolute—that he was in some respects unprincipled, and therefore held in but little

estimation by community, gave to the meeting, in the eye of the philanthropist, additional interest.

Had he been a man of rank, of consideration, or of fortune, the people at large would never have been left to make the above inquiry. He would have been followed—he would have been rescued, and if necessary, an army would have been roused at his call and awaited his commands. The wrongs of an individual once rocked the battlements of Troy, and made the throne of Priam tremble to its base. But the unfortunate and degraded Morgan was suffered to be carried off under circumstances calculated to excite the strongest suspicions, without scarce an inquiry.

I cannot in justice to historick truth forbear to remark that a number of the most conspicuous antimasons in the county; men who became so long after Morgan's abduction, and who have since participated in the rewards and honours of a triumphant party, designedly abstained from attending that meeting. Nor can I in justice to my own feelings, suffer this occasion to pass without applauding, in the highest terms, the candour, the good sense, and above all, the holy fervour which appeared to fill, inspire and expand the bosoms of the great mass of which it was composed. A writer of eminence, I believe it was Mr. Burke, observes, that the publick opinion is often wrong, but the publick feeling never. An outrage all thought had unquestionably been committed; but its extent and its authors were unknown. An inquiry was demanded—the publick indignation was roused, and the detection and punishment of guilt seemed to be its only object. A numerous and res-

pectable committee, consisting of Theodore F. Talbot, David E. Evans,* Trumbull Cary, Wm. Keyes, William Davis, Jonathan Lay, Timothy Fitch, Lyman D. Prindle, E. Southworth and James P. Smith were unanimously appointed for that purpose, and the meeting adjourned.

Similar ones were afterwards held in other counties, and committees appointed, a part of whom subsequently composed the celebrated Lewiston Convention.

The committee above named immediately caused a notice to be published, containing a brief statement of the facts and circumstances in the case so far as ascertained, and desired all who possessed any knowledge or information whatever in relation to either, to communicate the same without delay to some one of their members. A request was also sent to his Excellency Governour Clinton, desiring his aid—it was promptly afforded, and the following proclamation immediately issued :

* Mr. Evans soon after his appointment as one of the above committee, left Batavia for New York upon business, and was absent during the winter. On his return in the spring of 1827, anti-masonry having assumed a political character, Mr. Evans, of course declined participating in the acts of said committee, and never met with them afterwards. Col. Davis and some others at a subsequent period pursued a similar course. Thus it will be seen, that the republican members of said committee, who were anti-masons from principle, perceiving objects which have since been more fully developed, foresaw even at that day, the tendency to which the measures then in agitation would probably lead, and availed themselves of an early opportunity to express their disapprobation of the course proposed.—Subsequent events have shown, as well their wisdom on that occasion, as the folly and depravity of those who assented to the conversion of anti-masonry into a political engine.

1st Proclamation of the Governour.

(L. S.) DE WITT CLINTON, Governour of the State of New-York, to state officers and Ministers of Justice in said state, and particularly in the county of Genesee, and the neighbouring counties—*Greeting;*

WHEREAS, information, under oath, has been transmitted to me by Theodore F. Talbot, Esquire, and other citizens of the County of Genesee, acting as a Committee in behalf of the people of that county, representing that divers outrages and oppressions have been committed on the rights of persons residing in the village of Batavia, and that disturbances have ensued, which are injurious, and may prove destructive to peace and good order in that quarter. Now, therefore, I enjoin it upon you, and each of you, to pursue all proper and efficient measures for the apprehension of the offenders, and the prevention of future outrages. And I do also request the good citizens of this State, to co-operate with the civil authorities in maintaining the ascendency of law and good order.

Some partial examination of the committee afterwards, together with information received by them from different sources, inducing a belief in their minds, that the outrage was more aggravated than it was at first apprehended, another communication was addressed to the Governour, desiring his more effectual aid in the premises. With that promptness which ever marked his official course, he immediately issued another proclamation, on the 26th of October, 1826. And afterwards, as the proof strengthened, and the evidence of guilt became more and more apparent, on the 19th March, 1827, still another, as follows.

2d. Proclamation of the Governour.

WHEREAS, it has been represented to me, that *William Morgan*, who was unlawfully conveyed from the jail of the county of Ontario, sometime in the month of September last,

has not been found, and that it might have a beneficial effect in restoring him to his family and in promoting the detection and punishment of the perpetrators of this violen outrage, if, in addition to the proceeding heretofore adopted by me, a proclamation was issued offering a specific reward for these purposes:—*Now Therefore*, in order that the offenders may be brought to condign punishment and the violated majesty of the laws thereby effectually vindicated, I do hereby offer in addition to the assurances of compensation heretofore given, a reward of Three Hundred Dollars for the discovery of the offenders and a reward of One Hundred Dollars for the discovery of any and every one of them, to be paid on conviction; and also a further reward of Two Hundred Dollars for authentic information of the place where the said William Morgan has been conveyed, and I do enjoin it upon all Sheriffs, Magistrates, and other officers and Ministers of justice to be vigilant and active in the discharge of their duties on this occasion.

IN Witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand (L. S.) and the privy seal at the city of Albany, this 26th day of October, Anno Domini 1826.

DE WITT CLINTON.

3d. Proclamation of the Governour.

Whereas the measures adopted for the discovery of WILLIAM MORGAN, after his unlawful abduction from Canandaigua in September last, have not been attended with success: and whereas many of the good citizens of this State are under an impression, from the lapse of time and other circumstances, that he has been murdered:—Now therefore, to the end that, if living, he may be restored to his family, and, if murdered, that the perpetrators may be brought to condign punishment, I have thought fit to issue this proclamation, promising a reward of one THOUSAND DOLLARS for the discovery of the offender or offenders, to be paid on conviction and on the certificate of the Attorney General, or officer prosecuting on the part of the State, that the persons claiming the said last mentioned reward is or are justly entitled to the same under this proclamation. And I further promise a

free pardon, so far as I am authorised under the constitution of this State, to any accomplice or co-operator who shall make a full discovery of the offender or offenders. And I do enjoin it upon all officers and ministers of justice, and all other persons, to be vigilant and active in bringing to justice the perpetrators of a crime so abhorrent to humanity and so derogatory from the ascendency of law and good order.

IN witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and (L. S.) the Privy Seal at the city of Albany, this 19th day of March, Anno Domini 1827.

DE WITT CLINTON.

The Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the state of New-York, at its first meeting thereafter, in February 1827, adopted the following preamble and resolutions.

[*From the Albany Masonick Record, Feb.* 10.]

THE GRAND ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER of the State of New-York commenced its annual session in this city on Tuesday last, and adjourned this day. Upwards of one hundred and ten subordinate chapters were represented. Previous to its adjournment, the following proceedings were had:

To the Most Excellent the Grand Chapter of the State of New-York:—

The committee appointed by resolution of the grand chapter, on the affair of William Morgan, *respectfully reported:*

That they have attended to the duties assigned them, and that from the highly agitated and inflamed state of publick feeling on this subject, and from the false and undeserved imputations which have been thrown upon free-masons, and the masonick order generally, your committee deem it proper that this grand chapter should make a publick expression of its sentiments in relation to the affair alluded to. Your committee, as expressive of their views on the subject embraced in this report, would offer for the consideration of the grand chapter, the following preamble and resolutions:

Whereas, the rights of personal liberty and security are guaranteed by the free constitution, under which we, the

members of this grand chapter, in common with the rest of our fellow citizens, have the happiness to live: and whereas, we esteem the preservation of these rights of vital importance to the perpetuity and full enjoyment of the blessings of our republican institutions: and whereas, the community has lately witnessed a violation of the same, under the alleged pretext of the masonick name and sanction, (in the case of William Morgan): and whereas, the principles of our ancient and honourable fraternity contain nothing which in the slightest degree justify or authorise such proceedings; but, on the contrary, do in all their tenets and ceremonies, encourage and inculcate a just submission to the laws, the enjoyment of equal rights by every individual, and a high and elevated spirit of personal as well as national independence:—

Therefore Resolved, By this grand chapter, that we its members, individually, and as a body, do disclaim all knowledge or approbation of the said proceedings, in relation to the abduction of the said William Morgan; and that we disapprove of the same, as a violation of the majesty of the laws, and an infringement of the rights of personal liberty, secured to every citizen of our free and happy republick.

Resolved, That the following report, preamble and resolution be published.

A true extract from the minutes of the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the state of New-York.

JOHN O. COLE, *G. Secretary.*

The Lyons Royal Arch Chapter, in the County of Wayne, on the 15th day of March, 1827, adopted the following preamble and resolutions:

At a meeting of the Lyons Royal Arch Chapter, held at Chapter Hall, March 15, 5827, the following preamble and resolutions were adopted:

Whereas, the abduction of William Morgan, has given rise to much excitement in the publick mind, against the fraternity of free-masons, and as efforts have been made, both in publick newspapers, and in private circles, to charge the

outrage committed upon his person, against the whole body of masons, as such: and, whereas, many pretend to believe, and endeavour to inculcate that belief in others, that the masonick fraternity claims a right to inflict corporal punishment, and even put to death such of its members as reveal its secrets, or violate its laws—Therefore

Resolved, That we hereby declare unto the world, that masons acknowledge no laws which contravene the constitution and laws of their country, and that the masonick institution claims no right to inflict corporal or other punishment upon its members, except suspensions and expulsions, and that the exercise of any further or any greater power than this, would be in violation of the most sacred principles of our order.

Resolved, That we view with deep regret, the gross violation of the laws of our country, and the rules and principles of masonry, by members of our institution, in the late affair of William Morgan, and that we utterly disclaim all knowledge of, or participation whatever in the abduction of said Morgan; and that we will as masons, have no communication whatever with those persons who were engaged in the perpetration of this horrid outrage.

I certify the foregoing preamble and resolutions, to be a true extract from the minutes of the Lyons Royal Arch Chapter.—Dated March 15, 1827.

GRAHAM H. CHAPIN, *Secretary*.

Similar resolutions were adopted at the meetings of different Lodges and Chapters in various parts of the state. All united in the belief that a wrong had been committed—all disapproved of the same except a few inconsiderate men of both parties: and so long as the attention of the several committees was confined to the discovery and punishment of its guilty perpetrators, so long the considerate of all parties agreed in sentiment and wishes.

CHAPTER IX.

Morgan's Illustrations of masonry—Publication thereof.

While the several committees were pursuing their inquiries with great assiduity, and those suspected of guilt, preparing for the impending storm, the contemplated book entitled, "Morgan's Illustrations of Masonry," appeared. It was published in a pamphlet form, the cost of which might probably have been ten or eleven cents, and sold at first for one dollar. The copy right it seems, had been secured according to law, previous to its publication.

When the committee in March following, were about preparing their report for the press, some of their members addressed a note to Sheriff Thompson, desiring information from him in relation to certain papes found in Morgan's trunk previously taken upon attachment. The information thus sought to be obtained, was immediately furnished, and copies of the following affidavit, bond and letter delivered them, pursuant to such request. The commission of Capt. which it is pretended Morgan had receved from Gen. Jackson, was not among them, and for the best of reasons, because none such ever existed. The affidavit, bond and letter, were not inserted in said Report, and as they are calculated to throw some light upon a subject involved in mystery and may perhaps, serve to explain the intentions, the motives, and the expectations of those originally concerned in its publication, I have thought proper to insert them here.

On the 13th of March 1826, while Morgan was preparing his manuscripts, John Davids, one of his

partners, and others, made and subscribed the following oath :

" We and each of us, do hereby most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear upon the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, that we never will divulge during our natural lives, communicate or make known to any person or persons in the known world, our knowledge, or any part thereof, respecting William Morgan's intention, (communicated to us,) to publish a book on the subject of free-masonry, neither by writing, marking, or insinuations, or any way devisable by man." Sworn and subscribed this 13th day of March, 1826. Signed "John Davids" and other.

On the 5th day of August following, John Davids and David C Miller of Batavia, and Russel Dyer of Rochester, executed to said Morgan, a bond in the penal sum of five hundred thousand dollars, conditioned for the payment of one fourth part of the sum which should be received on the sale of a certain book upon free-masonry, which the said John Davids, David C. Miller, and Russel Dyer were about to publish.

On the 7th day of August, and two days only after said bond purports to bear date, capt. Morgan, in consequence of difficulty between him and his friends, addressed to them the following note :

" AUGUST, 7. 1826.

"GENTLEMEN–My note of this morning has not been answered. Further evasion and equivocation I will not submit to. Acknowledge you are not gentlemen, or I will expose you in twelve hours, unless you do as you agreed to do. I am not a child if you suppose I am you are mistaken. I am a man and will not

suffer myself to be imposed on--you have not acted as gentlemen--I am sory to be compelled to say it—every part of your conduct has been mysterious, and why so ? My first impressions were, that you are not honest men ; therefore I wish to settle and have no more to do with you. If either of you feel hurt, call on me as gentlemen and I will give you any satisfaction you wish. WILLIAM MORGAN."

The securing of a copy right to prevent others from publishing said book—its sale at first for one dollar —the oath of Davids and others--the bond executed by Miller. Davids and Dyer, furnish at least presumptive evidence, that avarice, and not a love of country, or a regard for its future prosperity and welfare, was the principal stimulus to their undertaking.

It was, without doubt, Morgan's intention at first, to have remained unknown as its author--and had his intention in that particular met the approbation of his more cunning and avaricious partners, his book would probably have remained as much of a secret to this day, as its author himself. They however, it seems, reasoned more correctly. They considered a stir among masons "necessary to secure its sale." and by their exertions, and the folly and depravity of masons, finaliy succeded."

But few copies were sold at a dollar. Its price was soon reduced to fifty cents—afterwards to twenty-five cents, and finally to about the first cost. No one it is believed, has made any profits of consequence, out of its publication or sale.

The book was at first sought after with considerable avidity. Few however, have had patience to read it through, and of those few, but a small part

are willing to acknowledge it. It has sunk almost into oblivion, and scarcely affords a subject for conversation. Having never read it, I am unable to speak of its merits. I beg liberty however, to refer my readers to the opinion of Solomon Southwick, Esq. of Albany, the late anti-masonick candidate for Governour, in relation thereto. It will be found in the National Observer, of Oct. 1826, and is in these words:

"We shall only add, to what has been said by the editor of the Repository, that as to the book, which Morgan has written, we do not believe it is worth a cent. We think that all who purchase it, will "pay dear for the whistle."—Such attempts have been made before now, and have always terminated in the disgrace of their authors, without injuring the cause of masonry. But, as we have said before and now repeat it, Morgan's folly, depravity, or wickedness, form no justification for the violation of the civil law, which has taken place in his person, as well as that of Miller the printer. If we have a government of laws, let us adhere to it; for anarchy is the ruin of all.

We repeat it again, that we do not believe Morgan's book to be worth a cent; but if there be any who wish to know something of the history of masonry that is worth knowing, let them purchase a book, which was translated from the German, about a year since, and published by Messrs. Hosfords in this city. The work is worth reading; for whilst it shews what abuses masonry has been subjected to in England, France, Italy, and elsewhere, it likewise discloses, as far as they can be disclosed, the good sources of the institution, and sublime principles of virtue which have ever governed it in its pristine purity. The author of the work in question, was a mason of high distinction in Europe; and the gentleman who translated it, has long been a respectable citizen of this state, (a naturalized German, who came to this country during the Revolution) and is well known to, and intimate with some of the most respectable citizens of Albany. We are not at liberty to mention his name; and should not having

mentioned it here, but for attracting the attention of the publick to his book, which possesses the interest of romance, or deep dramatick design, with the strictest regard to historick truth, and correct principles. It is worth a thousand such trash as Morgan's: which, we repeat it, whoever purchases, will "pay too dear for the whistle."

CHAPTER X.

Trial of Chesebro, Sheldon and others.

The county of Ontario having been the theatre of Morgan's abduction, became afterwards the theatre of its first judicial investigation. At the court of General Sessions held thereafter at Canandaigua, in Nov. 1826, two indictments were found by the Grand Jury of that county, against Nicholas G. Chesebro, Loton Lawson, Edward Sawyer and John Sheldon; the first for a conspiracy to seize said Morgan and carry him from thence to foreign parts, and secrete and confine him there. The second for carrying said conspiracy afterwards into execution. The indictments by agreement of parties were sent to the court of Oyer and Terminer, to be held at Canandaigua in January then following, for trial. At said court held in and for the county of Ontario, on the 1st day of January 1827, before the Hon. Enos T. Throop, Circuit Judge the Hon. Nathaniel W. Howell, First Judge of said county, and Judges, Younglove, Atwater and Brooks, the defendants were arraigned and ble[illegible] not guilty. A delegation from most or all of read it thro[illegible]

the several committees, selected for that purpose from the adjacent counties attended. The trial was one of great interest, and elicited much talent.

The presence of so many committees representing different popular meetings—the mystery which hung over Morgan's fate—the excitement which then prevailed—the number and ability of the Counsel, (no less than seven,) employed by said committees in aid of the publick prosecutor—the crowded audience which filled the Court House, intent apparently on their conviction, together with a variety of other circumstances, were calculated to render the approaching trial appalling, even to men conscious of their innocence.

On Monday the first day of the term, nearly one hundred witnesses were called and answered. Publick expectation was raised to the highest pitch. On Tuesday morning the District Attorney Mr. Whiting, moved on the trial of the first indictment. Col. Miller who had been subpœnaed by the defendants as well as the people was called, and to the surprise of every one, he who had borne so conspicuous a part in the transaction about to be reviewed, was not in attendance. He was called again, his default entered, and attachments were issued on motion of both parties. It having currently been reported that Miller had left Batavia with Mrs. Morgan, for the purpose of attending court, his neglet to answer created among the assembled crowd, peculiar and extraordinary sensations.

In the afternoon of Tuesday, a rumour was set afloat that Morgan's body had been found, was on its way thither, and would be in Canandaigua during

the night. It was a period of anxiety to the defendants, and of interest to their counsel.

On the following morning the motion for trial was renewed. Chesebro, Lawson and Sawyer, withdrew their pleas of not guilty, and plead guilty to both indictments, reserving of course, their right to move the court in arrest of judgement upon either.

The counsel for Sheldon then stated that he admitted the offence charged in the indictment had been committed, but denied his participation therein. A jury was thereupon empanneled to try the question thus put in issue. The cause was thereby reduced to narrow limits.

Mr. Whiting the publick prosecutor, (who is a mason,) having opened the case in a clear and lucid manner, and commented with great justness, feeling and severity upon the transaction generally, proceeded to introduce his proofs merely to identify Sheldon with the conspiracy. As the trial was one of great interest, not for its importance after Chesebro and others had plead guilty, but for its novelty, and as the testimony, particularly that of Samuel D. Greene,*

*It having been currently reported and generally believed that Samuel D. Greene, perjured himself at Canandaigua upon the trial of Sheldon, justice to him requires a statement of the circumstances which led him on that occasion to testify as he did.

A man by the name of Averill, from the county of Orleans, whose dress in some measure corresponded with that which Sheldon is represented to have worn, but whose person was very unlike his, came to Greene's house in Batavia about the time alluded to by him, on business, and some conversation took place in relation to the outrage committed on Miller's office. Averill also wrote a letter while there, not to Stephen Van Rensselaer as Greene swore, but to Solomon Van Rensselaer of Albany. He also subscribed it with his own name, and not with the name of John Sheldon, as

an expelled mason, upon which it is understood the verdict was almost entirely predicated, has been the subject of much controversy, I have thought proper to insert it at length, together with the able address of Judge Throop in pronouncing sentence upon the prisoners, and the affidavit of John Sheldon afterwards made and filed of record, which shows beyond all question, that the "mysterious stanger" which Greene saw, as he testified, at his house in Batavia, on the 10th and 11th of September preceeding, was not John Sheldon the defendant.

The examination of witnesses was conducted by the District Attorney, Mr. Whiting, and Mr. Adams, with great ability on the part of the prosecution, and by Mr. Sibley with equal ability on the part of the defendant. The closing remarks of Mr. Whiting were peculiarly impressive, and the address of Mr. Spencer to the jury in behalf of the defendant, was one of great force and elegance.

The county of Ontario some years before, had erected a splendid Court House, and with much taste, had decorated the room in which the jury had been empanneled and were then sitting in judgement upon the liberty of a fellow citizen, with the busts of Washington, Hamilton and La Fayette or Franklin, and

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Greene also testified. This letter has since been exhibited to a number of persons, and is as harmeless a piece of nonsense as was ever written.

Greene having been expelled some time before from the Lodge in this place, and being a zealous anti-mason, may have supposed that the defendant was the "mysterious stranger" whom he had seen before. Although no one it is believed, now pretends that he swore truly, still it does not of course follow that he was guilty of perjury. He might have been, and probably was only mistaken.

which I do not recollect, all of whom were conspicuous masons ; and had contributed as much perhaps, to redeem these once oppressed Colonies from foreign vassallage, and establish their liberties on a permanent basis, as any individuals among the long list of heroes, of sages, and patriots who had raised by their exertions the proud Arch of American glory.

Mr. Spencer's appeal to those venerable patriots, for the purity of masonick principles, together with an allusion to the Hon. Stephen Van Rensselaer of Albany, the present Grand Master of the Order, was one of the happiest flights of eloquence ever exhibited in a court of justice.

Sheldon, however was convicted.

Col. Miller was afterwards brought up on the attachment issued in behalf of the defendants, for disobeying a subpœna, and stated upon oath, that no fees had been tendered him, and that he had no money to bear his expenses. He was therefore discharged.

Extracts from the Printed Report of Sheldon's Trial.

Mrs. Hall, (the wife of the jailer) testified, that on the evening of the 12th September last, (Morgan then being a prisoner in the jail,) Lawson and a man called Foster came to the jail together ; Foster sat in the chair, held his head down and did not speak ; had on a dark surtout like that worn by defendant in court, and a black hat—Lawson said he had come to pay the debt and take Morgan out of jail—Mr. Hall not being at home, they stayed but a few minutes, and went away together. Lawson returned, and after satisfying the witness, by the representations of himself, Chesebro and Sawyer, that it would be right to release Morgan, she consented to do it, and as she was about going into the prison after him, Lawson went to the front door and whistled—she immediately went to the same door, and saw a

person, whom she took to be the one called Foster, come up to the steps of the jail from the east; saw him but a moment, turned and went into the prison, and released Morgan, who accompanied Lawson out of the jail. After securing the prison, witness went to the front door and saw Lawson and Foster on each side of Morgan, going to the east. Morgan appeared to be making resistance, and cried murder. Witness thinks that the person called Foster was the defendant, suspected he had assumed the name of Foster, and that he was a limitarian from Victor, whom she had before seen—defendant resided in Victor, and was then on the limits. Morgan was released about 9 o'clock.

Stephen Collier—Says defendant told him, some time in October last, that he supposed he knew as much about the Morgan business as any body; that he was at Kingsley's tavern on the evening he was taken away, busying the minds of the people so that they should not mistrust what was going on—that he saw the carriage when it went down after Morgan, saw it turn and come back—the defendant is an intemperate man, was intoxicated when this conversation took place, and when in that situation his tongue runs glib, is given to bragging, and pretends acquaintance with men and things he knows nothing about.

Israel R. Hall, the jailer—Knows the defendant, he came to the jail in the early part of the evening of the 12th September, and inquired for Lawson.

Thomas Beach—Was asked if he had had conversation with defendant about Morgan, says he has heard him say that he did not know any thing about his being carried off, and that he could prove himself to be at another place—gave same character of defendant as the witness Collier.

Hiram Hubbard—Drove the carriage that took Morgan away; knows defendant, but did not see him about the carriage, or any where except in Kingsley's bar-room, at evening—when he put on his great coat to go away, defendant sat in bar-room and asked witness where he was going.

John Whitney—Knows defendant, saw him near the Hotel on the 12th September—did not see him near the jail,

and does not know that defendant knew that Morgan was going away.

Mrs. Martha Davis—Saw some persons about the jail, but did not see defendant.

Eb. C. Kingsley—Defendant boarded with him during the month of September, and spent the evening of the 12th in the witness's bar-room—has no recollection of his being out of that room from 7 till 9 o'clock, when he took a candle and went to bed; saw him next morning as usual; did not see him in conversation with Lawson that evening or during the day.

Samuel D. Greene—Resides in Batavia, keeps the Park tavern in that village—defendant came to his house late in the evening of the 10th September—got him some victuals and he went to bed—took breakfast at witness's table next morning; after breakfast, told witness he had understood that an attempt had been made during the night to set Miller's office on fire, that he (the defendant) was suspected of doing it; called on witness to remember that he had slept in his house; defendant gave witness to understand that he was a royal arch mason; said he understood that Miller was about publishing a book, and if he succeeded Masonry would not be wanted any longer in this country. The defendant wrote a letter in hieroglyphikcs (which witness did not understand) to Stephen Van Rensselaer, signed the name of John Sheldon to it, and went to the post office with the avowed purpose of putting it in. Speaking of getting the papers from Miller, defendant said he had been about Batavia engaged in that business ever since the Friday before, and that if something was not done then he should give it up; defendant 'by an inuendo' gave witness to understand that perhaps Morgan and Miller would not be at Batvia to carry on the publication of the book. He requested witness to send for Kelsey Stone, who came to see him, spent a short time in the room with defendant alone. Witness would not have understood from what defendant said, that there was any intention to carry off Morgan, had he not before understood from others that such an intention ex-

isted. Defendant remained at witness's house until about noon of the 11th September--whether he dined there or not witness cannot say--and then disappeared. Witness never saw him before or since, until he now sees him in court;—he is confident, from present examination of his face, figure and dress, that he is the same man; had on, when at Batavia, a blue surtout, striped trowsers with patches on knees. Witness never told the facts above related to any one until his present testimony.

The counsel for the people here rested their cause.

The defence was opened by Mr. Sibley, and the following witnesses were called on the part of the defendant:

Kelsey Stone—Resides in Batavia, remembers being sent for, to go to the Park tavern and see a man there, some time during the forenoon of the 11th September: went accordingly and found a man up stairs on a bed, whom witness did not know; he told witness that Miller's office had been fired, and that he was suspected of doing it. Witness does not recognize the defendant as being the person—thinks that he is not—that he had on a surtout or frock coat, but does not recollect any other part of his dress, nor will he be positive that he did not wear a short coat.

E. C. Kingsley--Has no recollection of the defendant's being absent from his house on the 9th, 10th or 11th September; thinks if he had been absent he must have known it, and has no doubt that he was at home as usual.

William Bassett—Worked in the shop with defendant during September; has no recollection of his being absent;—must have known it if he had been, and verily believes he was not out of the village of Canandaigua on the 11th of September.

N. Prescott—Also worked with defendant on the same time --believes he was at home as usual on the 11th September; thinks he could not have been absent without witness remarking it. *Cross examined*—Defendant came into the shop the morning after Morgan was taken from this place, and said, "Morgan is carried off, I know all about the business, but shall not tell you; I know who went into the jail

after Morgan--he does not live in this village—Morgan has gone where the people of this country will never see him, but if his family will accept the funds the Masons have provided, they will be well enough off."—Defendant wore a blue surtout and striped pantaloons in September last.

Wm. C. Yale—Was the bar-keeper at Kingsley's, where defendant boarded in September last; has no recollection of his being absent on the 9th, 10th or 11th of September, and has no doubt but he was at home as usual.

Jacob Bowers—Boarded at Kingsley's in September; left defendant there on Saturday the 9th September, and found him there on his (the witness's) return on the morning of the 12th; did not know or hear of his having been absent in the mean time: defendant was in Kingsley's bar-room from early in the evening until 8 o'clock; was there when Hubbard went away, and when Hayward came in.

Holloway Hayward—Saw defendant at Kingsley's about dusk on the evening of 11th September, and from 8 to 9 o'clock on the evening of the 12th.

Jeffrey Chipman—Defendant was present a short time at the examination of Morgan before witness, on the evening of 11th September.

Timothy L. Bogue—Defendant worked for witness in September; does not remember his being absent on the 9th 10th or 11th of that month; is quite confident he saw him here about 1 o'clock in the afternoon of the 11th, and again in the early part of the evening; defendant was in Kingsley's bar-room on the evening of the 12th, and witness is confident he was there when the carriage went past.

Chauncey H. Coe, (a stage proprietor)—Proved that defendant could not have left Batavia after 9 o'clock in the forenoon of the 12th September, and have arrived at this place the same evening, by any publick conveyance, as the stages then run—the distance 48 miles.

Theodore F. Talbot—Called, and asked if he had possession of the original affidavit of Mrs. Hall, (the first witness) taken before J. Chipman, Esq. on the 23d September.—Answering in the affirmative, he is required to produce it,

and declines. The defendant's counsel serve him with a subpœna *duces tecum*, in open court, and again require the production of the affidavit—he still refuses, and is desired by the court to produce it; by which it appears that Mrs. Hall swore that the person called Foster was unknown to her at the time of making the affidavit.

The defendant here rested his cause.

Timothy Fitch—Called by the prosecution—says that he drew Mrs. Hall's affidavit, and that she told him at the time that she thought she knew Foster, and the witness' impression is that she named defendant.

Samuel Greenleaf,'(a proprietor of the publick stages)—Says that on the evening of the 7th Sept. last, three seats were taken for Batavia, under the name of "Capt. Johnson," but does not know who occupied them.

Several other witnesses were called on the part of the people, and of the defendant; but as they did not testify to any thing material to the cause,or interesting to the publick,their testimony is omitted.

Sheldon's Affidavit.

Ontario County, ss.—

John Sheldon, of the town of Victor, in said county, being duly sworn, saith, that he was in the village of Batavia in the month of October, eight years ago; that he has never been in said village since; that he never saw Samuel D. Greene till he saw him in Court this day,and never held any conversation with him whatever—that the statement made by Greene respecting an interview with this deponent in September last, is absolutely and totally false in every particular, so far as it relates to this deponent.—That this deponent is the father of three small children, and has no means of living, other than his daily labor. And this deponent farther says, that he never saw Loton Lawson in the jail of Ontario county; nor was he ever in the jail or the building connected with the jail of Ontario county, in company with the said Loton Lawson; nor was this deponent the person who was mentioned in the testimony of Mrs. Hall, given on the trial of

this deponent, and known by the name of Foster; nor has this deponent ever to his knowledge seen William Morgan, named in the indictment in this cause, nor does he know the said William Morgan; nor was this deponent in any manner whatever, either directly or indirectly, concerned in or privy to the facts charged against this deponent in the indictment in this cause; nor did this deponent know any thing of the carrying away of William Morgan from Canandaigua, on the 12th of September last, until the morning after it took place. And if this deponent has ever given any intimation in any way contrary to the facts contained in this affidavit, it was done in the way of romance, and from amusement only, and is the only fault of this deponent as connected with the matters which are the subject of said indictment of which he is conscious. JOHN SHELDON.

Subscribed and sworn, this 6th day Jan. 1827, before me,
JEFFREY CHIPMAN, *Commissioner, &c.*

Judge Throop's Address.

You have been convicted of a daring, wicked and presumptious crime—such an one as we did hope would not in our day have polluted this land. You have robbed the state of a citizen, a citizen of his liberty, a wife of her husband, and a family of helpless children of the endearments and protecting care of a parent. And whether the unfortunate victim of your rage has been immolated, or is in the land of the living, we are ignorant, and even you do not pretend to know. It is admitted in this case, and stands proved, that Morgan was, by a hypocritical pretence of friendship and charity, and that too in the imposing shape of pecuniary relief to a distressed and poverty bound prisoner, beguiled to entrust himself to one of your number, who seized him, as soon as a confederate arrived to his aid, almost at his prison door, and in the night time hurried him into a carriage, and forcibly transported him out of the state. But great as are the individual wrongs which you have inflicted on these helpless and wretched human beings, they are not the heaviest part of your crime. You have disturbed the publick peace—you have dared to raise your parricidal arms against the laws

and constitution of your government—you have assumed a power which is incompatible with a due subordination to the laws and publick authority of your state. He was a citizen under the protection of our laws; you were citizens and owed obedience to them. What hardihood and wickedness then prompted you to steel your hearts against the claims of humanity, and dare to set at defiance those laws to which you owed submission, and which cannot suffer a citizen's liberty to be restrained with impunity, without violating its duties of protection, assured to every individual under the social compact? Will you plead ignorance? Some of you, at least, have had the advantage of education and moral instruction, and hold respectable and responsible stations in society; and all of you have learnt, what every school-boy in this happy land, this free and intelligent community, knows, that the unrestrained enjoyment of life, liberty and property, is guaranteed to every individual living, obediently, under our laws. Our constitution shews it; and the declaration of our independence declares, that the unmolested enjoyment of liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are the unalienable rights of man. So sacred do we hold personal liberty, that even the impressment of a seaman from one of our ships, has been considered a sufficient cause for national war. Man here, is not like men in other countries, a submissive vassal; but every citizen is a sovereign and I am happy to say, that here he possesses that intelligence and high sense of feeling, which befits his elevated station. Our laws will resent such attacks as you have made upon their sovereignty. Your conduct has created, in the people of this section of the county, a strong feeling of virtuous indignation. The court rejoices to witness it—to be made sure that a citizen's person cannot be invaded by lawless violence, without its being felt by every individual in the community. It is a blessed spirit, and we do hope that it will not subside —that it will be accompanied by a ceaseless vigilance and untiring activity, until every actor in this profligate conspiracy is hunted from his hiding place, and brought before the tribunals of the country, to receive the punishment merited by his crime. We think that we see in this publick sensation

the spirit which brought us into existence as a nation, and a pledge that our rights and liberties are destined to endure. But this is not all; your offence was not the result of passion suddenly excited, nor the deed of one individual. It was preconcerted, deliberated upon, and carried into effect, by the dictates of the secret councils and conclave of many actors. It takes its deepest hues of guilt from a conspiracy —a crime most dreaded, from the depravity of heart it evinces, the power for unlawful purposes which it combines, and from its ability to defy the power of the law, and ultimate danger to the publick peace. Hence it is, that the crime is considered full, when the wicked purpose is proved to have been formed; and the subsequent carrying into effect the object of the conspiracy, does not, in the eye of the law, elevate the degree of the crime.

The legislature have not seen fit, perhaps, from the supposed improbability that the crime would be attempted, to make your offence a felony. Its grade and punishment has been left to the provisions of the common law, which treats it as a misdemeanor, and punishes it with fine and imprisonment in the common jail. The court are of opinion that your liberty ought to be made to answer for the liberty of Morgan: his person was restrained by force; and the court, in the exercise of its lawful powers, ought not to be more tender of your liberty, than you, in the plenitude of lawless force, were of his.

With regard to you, *Lawson*—It appeared in proof, that you was an active agent in this affair—you went forward and took this man from the jail, and delivered him over to those who stood waiting with a carriage to receive him. Whether you accompanied that carriage or not, is not in proof. But in your excusatory affidavit you say nothing about it, leaving it to fair inference, that you did accompany him in that carriage. There is nothing, either in your affidavit, or your proof to the court, which does much to mitigate your offence, except so far as they shew, that your poverty has not been accompanied by idleness, and your character has not been stained by other transgressions. Under

all the circumstances of your case, the court feel it their duty to sentence you to two years imprisonment in the common jail of this county.

As to you, *Chescbro*—It appears by your affidavit that you did not lay your hands upon this man to carry into effect the conspiracy; and it appears by unquestionable proof, that you did not leave this village with the carriage. But you admit, at least tacitly, in your affidavit, that you was one of the conspirators; and your language to the jailor, when he called upon you the next day to account for your conduct, and warned you that the publick would demand an explanation, shewed an unsubdued spirit. It has been satisfactorily proved to us,that you are a thriving mechanick; that you have a respectable standing in the community, and up to the period of this transaction, your character for industry, honesty, quiet and moral deportment, was without reproach. Under the circumstances of your case, the court sentence you to one year imprisonment in the common jail of this county.

As to you, *Sawyer*, your affidavit, which, from the uniform good character you have proved, we fully believe to be true, states, that you had no knowledge of this conspiracy, and took no active part in it. But your accompanying Lawson at his request, to the jail, to inform the jailor's wife that she would be safe in receiving the amount of Morgan's debt from Lawson, and letting him go, with the other circumstances, were sufficient to have convicted you, if you had stood trial, and you acted wisely in pleading guilty. You state that you had no idea that he was under restraint, until you saw him enter the carriage a short distance from you, and that you did not suspect that he was forced into it, until in the progress of your walk, you picked up his hat—that you was then surprised and confounded, and did not therefore give the alarm—but you spent the rest of the evening at a publick house,and gave no intimation of what you had seen. This then is your offence:—You should have given the alarm—you should have raised the hue and cry, and endeavoured to effect a rescue. You however expressed in your

affidavit, and have always evinced, a feeling of remorse. The court therefore sentence you to one month imprisonment in the common jail of this county.

As to you, *Sheldon*, you denied any participation in the conspiracy, and put yourself upon trial. As to all the acts proved against you, there was mystery, and I doubt whether you was the man. You was at the time confined on the limits of the jail—you was most strongly identified in an appearance at Batavia, and although your proof of an *alibi* was not complete, there was much in it to shake our faith in the fact that you was the mysterious stranger whom the witness saw. Your confessions of guilt, however, were clear and indisputable, and fully warranted the verdict; and the only explanation of them you offered, was the ungracious one, that your confessions were the vain glorious boastings of a drunkard and a liar. Taking all things into consideration, the court have adjudged you to three months imprisonment in the common jail of the county.

CHAPTER XI.

Lewiston Convention—Its proceedings.

The conviction of Chesebro and others at Canandaigua, the excitement which began to prevail, and the information there received, led the several committees very properly to suspect, that all the facts had not been developed—that perseverance would effect much, and as the popular current was beginning to set in their favour, it is not improbable that some of their number might have supposed, that to be first and foremost in so great and so glorious an undertaking, would thereafter lead to rewards and honours. A meeting of the several committees was therefore proposed to be held at Lewiston, in the

county of Niagara, without delay; hence the name of the Lewiston Convention. Its ostensible objects were, to ascertain, arrest and convict the perpetrators of this nefarious outrage.

A more worthy and deserving motive, never entered the human mind—but whether the means there taken, were the most prudent and politick which could have been devised, or the best calculated to effect an object so desirable in itself, and so necessary to assert the supremacy of the law, some have recently questioned. It had formally been the practice in this vicinity, to arrest the supposed offenders, preparatory to their punishments, and sometimes too, even upon suspicion. But as this convention was probably intended, at least by a part of those who composed it, to supercede the necessity of any other legislative or judicial tribunal, and to introduce a new era in politicks, religion and law, they did not, although they obtained conclusive evidence, if we are to credit their statement of the guilt of certain individuals, think it proper to arrest them, because it would have destroyed the pretence for subsequently asserting that no mason, however guilty, could ever be punished. They only appointed a committee, to use the language of Dr. Backus, in his letter to Col. Norton, a copy of which is annexed, "to draft an account of the transactions west of here, and to petition the Governour to offer a larger reward for the disclosure of the fate of Morgan," and adjourned.—The object of this convention being only to ascertain facts, an official report of its proceedings could not have been expected, and ought not to have been desired. Secrecy was all important. Some of its

members however were unwilling to remain unknown, and equally unwilling that the parts which they severally took on this occasion should be concealed from publick view. They panted for renown.

Dr. F. F. Backus, a Physician in Rochester, a son of the venerable Dr. Backus, formerly President of Hamilton College, and an efficient member of the Convention, on the 30th of January, 1827, wrote to his friend, Heman Norton, then at Albany, and now an anti-masonick member of Assembly from the County of Munroe, a letter containing a statement of the proceedings of that Convention, and of the discoveries which they had made, *with a view probably to facilitate the arrest of those suspected.* This, together with a letter of Bates Cook, Esquire, a Lawyer at Lewiston, of similar import, and some others, is all the information which has yet been given to the publick in relation to its doings or proceedings.*

These letters, said to have been confidential, were delivered by Col. Norton to Solomon Southwick,

*Had the sole object of this Convention been to detect and punish guilt, and had they ascertained the authors of that guilt, as they pretend, it is natural to suppose that they would have caused the suspected persons to be arrested, and not emblazoned their own discovery to the world in newspapers and handbills, for the purpose of enabling those suspected to escape. Had their object been originally to avail themselves of the then growing excitement, for the purpose of acquiring thereby political influence, or power, or fame, they would unquestionably have pursued the course they did. Whether the conduct of this Convention is imputable to the vanity of some of its members, or to their want of prudence, and discretion, or to their ambitious designs, is difficult to determine. At all events nothing could have been more unwise. No course which they could have taken would so effectually have jeopardized the sincerity of their intentions.

Esquire, editor of the National Observer, by whom they were published. The letter of Dr. Backus being more full than either of the others, his standing in society being respectable, and his literary attainments, as will be perceived, being of no ordinary cast, the letter itself too being better calculated to express the views and feelings of the Convention, I have thought proper to insert it at full length, precisely as it first appeared in the National Observer.

Rochester, Jan. 30, 1827.

DEAR SIR—I arrived from Lewiston last Saturday evening. We had an interesting meeting, and feel ourselves amply compensated for all our trouble and expense. The delegates assembled, were Cary, Davis, Holden and Fitch, from Batavia; Heman Chapin, J. Buel, and O. Benjamin, from Bloomfield; Thad. Lacy, and John Garbut, from Wheatland and Chili; Esquire Rawson, Jenks, and Wheeler, from Victor; Judge Devoe and Bates Cook, from Lewiston and Niagara Falls, and Samuel Works and myself from this place, (Weed not going, being *threatened!*)—forming a body of able bodied men, seventeen in number. There never was a happier man than Cook was, the day that we arrived; he needed our presence and co-operation. The fraternity in and about Lewiston were in a terrible stew at our arrival and threatened wonderfully. We paid no attention to them the first night. Early in the morning we all started in a body for Fort George. We engaged a room at a publick house, and Cook informed Dr. —— of our wish to see and converse with him; after half an hour he came, and told us at full length, the whole story, pretty much as Cook had informed us; only that his statement was more full and particular. He communicated rather more to us, than we anticipated. He corrected one point, viz. *that Morgan's request for a bible was not granted, but he was dispatched forthwith!* His informer was . . . . . of that place, a brother of . . . . . of Buffalo. The Dr. does not think him implicated, but thinks he had his information from M. . . . . His state-

ment was all put down in writing in the form of an affidavit, which he stands ready to sign at any time when it shall be needed. He also informed us, that he had a short time afterwards, a relation of the same facts from another mason, of the name of L..... who had it from a Mr. C..... of Buffalo, who was an actor in the scene of the night of the 14th—he is since dead. After leaving Fort George, we crossed over to Fort Niagara, and Col. Jewett being sick, we employed the tavern keeper under the hill to assist in examining the magazine, that being the only part of the fort that we thought worth examining; and we found appearances there, that satisfied us, that Morgan must have been there, and probably was there executed. This part of the fort never had been examined before.

We had several witnesses before us, who in their testimony corroborated the principal facts of . . . . .'s relation.

I would write more at length, but have no time before the mail closes only to say, that the delegation thought proper to appoint a committee to draft an account of the transactions west of here, and to petition the Governour to offer a large reward for the disclosure of the fate of Morgan. We understand, since our return, that . . and . . have left the country, bag and baggage. In haste, respectfully yours, &c.

F——F. B——.

Mr. —— ——, Albany.

Dr. Backus in the above letter, it will be perceived, says that a Mr. C———, (Seth Chapin, meaning,) of Buffalo, was an actor in the scene of the 14th, and had since died. Mr. G. Chapin thereupon addressed to Dr. Backus a letter, and enclosed to him some affidavits, which showed that his deceased relative could not have been at Fort Niagara, as stated in Dr. Backus' letter, to which Dr. Backus, and his friend, Samuel Works, replied as follows:

The undersigned attended at Lewiston, on the 25th ult. as delegates from the Rochester committee, to investigate the circumstances of the abduction of Capt. William Mor-

gan. During the examination of the undersigned, at Lewiston, some information of an unsatisfactory character come to their knowledge, implicating a Mr. Chapin, of Buffalo, in the affair, tending to show that he was present at Fort Niagara on the night of the 14th of September last. This information was not intended for the publick eye, until something more certain could be ascertained. The information, however, having been alluded to in a private letter, afterwards made publick, contrary to the intentions of the writer; the undersigned deem it their duty to state, that from several affidavits submitted to them, they are convinced that Mr. Seth Chapin, of Buffalo, now deceased, could not have been present at Fort Niagara, at the time above mentioned. The undersigned, therefore, consider it due to the family and friends of Mr, Seth Chapin, thus publickly to state, that as far as they have ascertained, he is in no way implicated in the unhappy transaction.

FREDERICK F. BACKUS,
SAMUEL WORKS.

Rochester, February 22, 1827.

The above letter not meeting the entire approbation of Mr. Chapin, he addressed to him a second letter, and received the following answer.

Rochester, Feb. 20th, 1827.

SIR: I received yours of the 15th this evening. You requested me to answer it immediately. As to my promulgating a report that "a man named Chapin, of Buffalo, confessed upon his death-bed that he had assisted in the execution of Morgan," it is false. Last Wednesday, for the first time, I heard a report that a man by that name, at Buffalo, had made some disclosures to his physician, previous to his death, relative to the Morgan affair: but what they were I was not told. Some time in the course of the day I saw Mr. Fitch, of Batavia—inquired of him; he said he had never heard any thing of the kind. I was then satisfied that it was a fabrication, and have said nothing on the subject since, only that it was a fabrication. You further observe, that you have seen a letter, said to have been written by

me, in our Daily Advertiser, in which I mention a Mr. C. of Buffalo, as being an actor in the scene, &c. and that he is since dead. On my return from Lewiston I wrote a line hastily, late in the evening, to Col. Norton, at Albany, stating to him a brief outline of some of the discoveries of the committee. This letter was, of course, a private one, and I knew nothing of its publication until I saw it in an Albany newspaper. But you observe I state it as information related by the Dr. of whom I there speak. Your informant, whom I know, is therefore mistaken as to the first charge—and as to that contained in the published letter, my author is probably known to you.

I regret extremely to have wounded the feelings of any man by any thing that should have fallen from my pen—and probably can but faintly appreciate your feelings, but hope this explanation will be satisfactory. If not, I ever stand ready to communicate further. F. F. BACKUS.

G. CHAPIN, Esq.

This letter being equally unsatisfactory with the former, called forth from Dr. Cyrenus Chapin, father-in-law to the deceased, the same Dr. Chapin who was taken prisoner by the British and Indians during the late war, and recaptured himself, his companions, and their guard, on Lake Ontario, in a manner deserving the thanks of his government and country, the following, to which no reply was given.

Buffalo, Feb. 25, 1827.

SIR: In the absence of my nephew, I have opened your letter to him, of the 20th inst. which is in reply to one written you by him, requesting you to inform him from whom you derived the information to which you have given publicity, that SETH CHAPIN, deceased, was concerned in the alleged murder of William Morgan. You was requested to state explicitly the name of the author of this most wicked slander. This you have evaded—and you must allow me to say, sir, that the wound you have inflicted, requires a different mollient than the one proffered by you. As I was the

father-in-law of the Mr. C. to whom you allude, can you for a moment conceive that I can, or shall, look tamely on and see my daughter's feelings torn by so cruel an outrage; and at a time too when they were sufficiently lacerated by her severe afflictions without the aid of base and infamous slanders, to extinguish every vestige of hope and comfort? Neither shall I sit quietly and see her innocent babes just expanding into life, lying under the infamy and disgrace of the imputation, that the foul crime of murder is suspended over the grave of their deceased father. Can any one be so base, and so divested of all feeling, as not to shrink from such an infamous slander?

Although you might have been heated in your imaginations, and your misguided zeal might have carried you far beyond the bounds of reason, still I am at a loss to conjecture what malignant fiend could have entered your brain and induced you to endeavour to fix the stain of guilt and infamy on the innocent—and one, too, whom the silence of the grave deprives of the privilege of repelling the foul calumny; when by so doing, you must have been sensible that the only effect would be to wring the hearts of surviving relations.

Now sir, if your only motives had been to investigate truth, you would not have turned aside from the track, and been guilty of spreading abroad this slanderous report. Was it not more your intention to create excitement than to promote inquiry and investigate truth? Had you been the gentleman I expected you was, you would have unhesitatingly answered who your informant was.

Now, sir, as you have given publicity to so wicked a slander, depend upon it, you shall not be suffered to shield yourself by saying you wrote confidentially to Col. Norton, without any expectation that your letter would be published. In the first place, I have some regard to Col. Norton's good or bad opinion. And in the second place, as you have been the cause of giving publicity to this most wicked and vile slander, you must and shall answer me who your informant was; and disclose to me the grounds you had to put in cir-

culation such a false and wicked report; otherwise, measures will be taken in this business, of a decisive and unequivocal character.

Your reply to this will be expected.

CYRENUS CHAPIN.

Dr. F. F. Backus.

The above correspondence is not inserted on account of any intrinsick importance attached to it, but in order to rescue the memory of a worthy man from undeserved reproach, and more especially to show the manner in which charges of the most serious kind have been made by some of that Committee —their unwillingness to retract them when proved to be false—and also to exhibit one among a multitude of other cases, wherein masons were compelled in the then state of the publick mind, though perfectly innocent, to submit without redress to injuries and insults—a state which it is feared will continue, so long as infamy is regarded by so many "as the passport to honor, and degradation the road to renown."

CHAPTER XII.

Petition of the Lewiston Convention to the Legislature of New-York—Mr. Granger's report—Debate thereon.

The Lewiston Convention, it appears, from Dr. Backus' letter to Col. Norton, of the 30th of January 1827, (a document to which I refer with great satisfaction, because it is the only one extant, save two or three letters from other members of similar import,) resolved among other things, to petition the Legislature, then in session, for its aid. A petition was ac-

cordingly presented soon thereafter, desiring that the reward before that time offered for the apprehension and conviction of those concerned in Morgan's abduction and murder be increased, and also, that a special commission issue for the purpose of investigating the transactions heretofore in part related, with new vigour, and it was hoped, with final success.

The Petition being presented in the Assembly, was referred to a select committee, of which Mr. Granger, a gentleman of high respectability, from the county of Ontario, was Chairman, who afterwards reported thereon as follows :

That these petitions are signed by many highly respectable committees, who have been appointed on behalf of their fellow-citizens, to ascertain the facts connected with this most flagrant violation of the rights of a citizen, by which he has been deprived of liberty, if not of life.

These petitions set forth, that on the 11th day of September last, the said William Morgan was by colour of criminal process taken from the village of Batavia, in the county of Genesee, to Canandaigua, in the county of Ontario; that upon examination before a magistrate, the said Morgan was discharged; that he was subsequently, and upon the same day, arrested upon a demand against him, upon which judgment was obtained, and he confined within the gaol of the county of Ontario; that on the evening of the 12th of September, certain persons who had been previously engaged in procuring the seizure of Morgan at Batavia, and in his subsequent removal to and confinement at Canandaigua, discharged the debt for which he had been committed, and caused him to be liberated from prison: That on leaving the prison, the said Morgan was violently seized, and against his consent forced into a carriage which was rapidly driven from said village of Canandaigua, since which time no certain information had been obtained concerning him, and that with this deprivation of liberty are connected many circum-

stances which create a belief that he has been deprived of life. The foregoing averments are embraced in all the petitions before the committee.

A portion of the petitioners further represent that said Morgan was conveyed to the Niagara frontier, where they allege that he was murdered on the night of the 14th of September last; and they all join in the belief that the conspiracy against this citizen was extended through several of the western counties, and was the result of a previously concerted plan.

Under these circumstances the petitioners represent that the courts of a single county are inadequate to the emergency, and ask the interposition of the legislative authority, to procure a full developement of a plot so base in design, so fearless in execution, and fraught with consequences so dangerous to the liberties of our people.

Your committee have delayed their report with the expectation that the promised testimony would be furnished to substantiate the charges contained in the petitions.

Within a few days several affidavits have been forwarded to your committee, none of which reach the most severe allegations of the petitioners.

From the testimony adduced, no doubt remains in relation to the unlawful seizure and removal of Morgan, for which offence several persons were arrested, and having pleaded guilty to the indictments found against them, are now suffering the penalties of the law in the gaol of the county of Ontario.

The situation of this unfortunate man after leaving Canandaigua, so far as legal proof has been furnished, is still left to conjecture; but by the affidavits presented, many circumstances are brought to bear upon the allegation that he was taken to Niagara, whatever may have been his subsequent fate.

The strongest proof in support of this position is to be found in the affidavit of *Paul Moshier*, which, though resting principally upon information derived from others, when not under oath, carries to the minds of your committee a belief of its general correctness. This affidavit is partially corrob-

orated by the certificate of A. G. Hinman, a Justice of the Peace for the county of Niagara, setting forth the proceedings had before him against one *Eli Bruce* of said county.—An affidavit of *David Maxwell*, is also presented, which may be considered as having a collateral bearing upon this point, touching the probability of Morgan's removal towards the Niagara river.

An attested copy of the affidavit of one *William Terry*, of Niagara, Upper Canada, has been presented to your committee; much as this deposition may be calculated to create the dreadful belief that the life of Morgan was taken at Fort Niagara, the statements in it are too undefined in their character, to warrant your committee in acting on them: The names of his informants are not given, and it would seem by the affidavit, that his information was principally derived from residents of the Province of Upper Canada, beyond the reach of our judicial authorities, and of any power that our government could create.

Much animadversion has been had upon the statements made by said Terry, and as some publick journals have pronounced him unworthy of belief, the committee feel it due to him and to those that procured his testimony to state, that certificates have been furnished on this subject, which satisfy them that the imputation cast upon the character of that gentleman was unjust. Your committee have now given a concise reference to that part of the testimony presented, which they consider of a character sufficiently definite to bear upon the allegations contained in the petitions. It is also shown to your committee by the affidavit of the wife of Morgan, that she knows nothing of his fate other than what is known generally, and that she has not seen him nor heard from him since the said 11th of September.

The committee also present to the house many other affidavits in relation to this subject; but they are of a description so vague, resting often upon slight circumstances, and in some cases without giving even the names of those suspected, that however unpleasant may be the impressions made by them upon the minds of your committee individually, they are not of a character which in their opinion would

justify a statement of their contents in a report to this house.

After a full examination of this subject, your committee have found themselves surrounded by embarrassments upon every side.

They have endeavoured to devise a tribunal for the investigation of this transaction which could have a jurisdiction co-extensive with the section of country through which this conspiracy is charged to have extended; which would possess power to force the attendance of witnesses from every part of that country, with right to imprison those who should refuse to answer questions legally proposed; which would secure the arrest and detention for trial of those against whom proof should be made, and yet which should not infringe upon those chartered privileges that secure to every citizen the right of trial by jury, according to the course of the common law, privileges to which a free people should cling as to the last rock of their political safety.

Upon the deepest reflection, your committee are of opinion, that such a tribunal, while it would be doubtful in principle and dangerous in precedent, could not materially add to the powers vested in our existing courts.

To arrest the progress of this glaring crime; to surrender to the injured and insulted laws of our country, their so wanton violators; to protect our people in the enjoyment "of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," is the duty of every citizen, and particularly of those to whom are delegated the power of acting for the general weal. Yet in doing so, we should not forget, that while we acknowledge no privileged orders in our community, our free institutions are secured equally to all.—Let those who trample upon their country's laws, answer at the bar of that country for the offence, but the moral sense of the community should not be weakened by confounding the innocent with the guilty.

Aware that this transaction has called forth the deep and merited indignation of a people jealous in the protection of those liberties so dearly bought, and that are so firmly guarded by the constitution and laws of our country, as sacred in the humble citizen as in those clothed with the highest powers that freemen can bestow, your committee have anxiously

endeavoured to recommend such means as in their view would most conduce to the arrest and conviction of those who have been actors in a scene which we hope is and will remain unparalleled in the history of our country.

They therefore introduce the following resolutions.

Whereas it appears that one William Morgan, citizen of this state, was in the month of September last, forcibly and unlawfully taken from the village of Canandaigua, in the county of Ontario, since which period all attempts to discover the fate of said Morgan, have proved unavailing, Therefore,

Resolved, If the honourable the Senate concur herein, that the person administering the government of this state be requested to issue his proclamation, offering a reward of five thousand dollars, for the discovery of the said William Morgan, if living; and a like sum of five thousand dollars for the murderer or murderers of said Morgan, if dead, to be paid on conviction.

Resolved, If the honourable Senate concur herein, that a joint committee of the two houses be appointed, consisting of five members, two to be taken from the Senate and three from the Assembly, whose duty it shall be, to visit the several counties of Ontario, Monroe, Livingston, Genesee, Erie, Niagara, and Orleans, or such of them as they shall think proper, with full power to send for persons and papers, to inquire into the facts and circumstances connected with the abduction, detention and disposition of the said William Morgan, and to report their proceedings to the next legislature; that such other and further proceedings may be adopted as the nature of the case and the liberty and safety of our citizens may require.

An interesting debate was afterwards had upon Mr. Granger's resolutions, both of which were rejected by large majorities.

DEBATE IN THE ASSEMBLY,

On the resolutions appointing a Committee of Inquiry to visit the western part of this State, and offering an additional reward of 5000 *dollars for the discovery of Morgan.*

Mr. Granger said that it was due more to the other gentlemen of the committee than to himself, to make a few re-

marks in explanation of the course they had taken in their investigation of probably the most unpleasant and embarrassing subject ever submitted to a legislative committee, and who had been furnished with no facts or documents other than those embraced in the report, or to be found in the bundle upon the table.

In considering the subject the committee were desirous of adopting a plan best calculated to detect the offenders, or should it fail to do that, to allay the excessive excitement that now pervades the western part of the state.

Fatal objections existed in the creation of such a court as would meet the requirements of the petitioners, who have prayed for the creation of a tribunal with not only the powers usually granted to the legislative committee, but the right to imprison those who should refuse to attend and answer.

Such an inquest in its progress through that section of country would be much more likely to increase than to allay the existing agitation. In a moment of excitement, unguarded expressions might procure the arrest of innocent men, who indignant at the suspicion, might refuse to answer, and thus would your gaols be filled with persons charged with contempt towards this novel court, which could only confine them during the short time of its session, or leave them imprisoned at its dissolution, with no power vested in any one for their release. Such a court could not indict: it could not convict, nor could it even gather information that would be testimony in any future investigation. The committee were therefore all of the opinion that such a course of inquiry could answer no end other than to create a new commotion or extend and heighten the present excitement. These considerations of policy were sufficient to determine them, had there been no doubts as to the principle and precedent of such a tribunal.

The committee were not ignorant of the objections to be urged against the first resolution. They were aware that so heavy a reward might open the door to perjury, and that strong inducement to that crime could be found in such a sum, by which probably the innocent might be sacrificed;

they also reflected that the executive had already offered a reward probably unprecedented, and to the full extent of the appropriation placed at his disposal for such emergencies; but they further consider this man, if alive, was probably at a great distance; in a foreign country, and could only be procured at a heavy expense of time and money, or if dead, the transaction was shown to be intricate in the investigation, and that the detection of the guilty would be attended with many difficulties.

Considerable difference of opinion existed in the committee in relation to the second resolution proposed. Some of its members believed that it would continue rather than allay the present feeling, but he had differed from them upon that subject: he had believed, and did now believe, that an intelligent committee, consisting of gentlemen residing in those sections of the state that are not excited by this question: clothed with the authority, and carrying with them the respect that would always belong to a committee thus created, would be enabled calmly to examine all the facts connected with this transaction: that such an examination would much allay the existing feeling; would be more likely to lead to the discoveries, than would any act done by a committee partaking of a strong excitement; and that it might remove any unjust imputations that now exist. These were the motives that had governed him in his decision, and which would induce him to vote for the resolutions.

Mr. G. said he had thus plainly stated the facts connected with the report of the committee. Residing in a part of the state where there was much agitation on this subject, and where there existed an excitement in which he might be supposed to be a partaker, he should say as little as was consistent with his duty, as a chairman of the committee appointed to investigate the transaction which they had found of a character the most unpleasant and perplexing.

Mr. Bucklin.---This is an unpleasant subject; and I regret very much that it should have been thought of sufficient importance to require legislative attention.

But as the right to petition for a redress of grievances, is by the constitution, bill of rights, and the genius of our gov-

ernment, secured to every citizen, and as a respectful memorial on the subject of the abduction of Morgan, has found its way to this house, it became necessary that it should take the usual course of legislation. The petition was therefore at once referred to a committee, highly respectable both for talent and integrity. And I suppose that all the facts, upon which these resolutions are predicated, are embodied in the report which the committee have laid before the house. From that report it is seen that a tremendous excitement prevails in the western section of the state in relation to this affair: and to excitement alone are we to look for a justification of legislative interference.

A proclamation issued by the executive has already gone forth, offering a reward of 1000 dollars for the production of Morgan, if living; and if dead, 2000 dollars for the discovery of his murderers, to be paid on conviction; with a full pardon to all who may aid in the disclosure.

It is now proposed to add 5000 dollars to the reward already offered. And the important question presented to the committee is, whether it is wise, prudent or necessary, that this enormous sum should be offered; and that too under the sanction of legislative enactment? Is not the sum already offered sufficiently large to accomplish the object? If it can be accomplished, without the aid of deception, fraud or perjury, which there is no little reason to fear would be invited by, and grow out of, the unreasonable reward proposed.

In my judgment, sir, if you authorise this reward, you open the judicial tribunals of that region to a scene of perjury and fraud, stimulated by cupidity, and goaded to madness by the excitement, which will jeopardize alike the innocent and the guilty; and involve perhaps both in the general ruin.

Why, sir, look at the state of things as it exists in that region.

On the strength of this excitement a publick newspaper has been established at Rochester, for the avowed purpose of fanning this flame, and increasing the general fever. This paper circulates over that whole region of country. Anonymous letters, inflammatory articles, essays, and affi-

davits headed with, "*Murderers of poor Morgan,*" *Morgan and Masonry,*" &c. fill its columns. Meetings are called in the different towns, villages, and neighbourhoods: at which resolutions of the most inflammable character, against the whole body of the fraternity, are passed. The conspiracy charged upon the institution itself, and every member implicated, either as principal or accessary before or after the fact; not one of whom is hereafter, according to these resolutions, to be supported for any office, or place of publick trust---and all this published, commented upon, and approved in this publick journal.

Under this state of feeling, is any thing further necessary to end this effervescence in shedding of blood, but an adequate cash reward? No sir.

A short time since a gentleman in appearance, and apparently intelligent, residing within the sphere of this general ferment, called on me with a letter of introduction from a friend in one of these excited counties. In the course of conversation I chanced to inquire, whether any thing new on the subject of the Morgan affair, had transpired in that region; as the city papers of that morning, contained certain vague rumours and reports, which were said to have been furnished by a gentleman from the west. He said no. Nothing had as yet been developed, calculated to clear it of the mystery in which the transaction was involved. He inquired whether I was a member of the order? I told him I was, and had been for many years. Then, said he, *I presume you know where Morgan is, and what has been his fate.* I told him no; that it was extremely uncharitable to suppose that the whole body of the fraternity should have been engaged in a conspiracy against *one* man; and he too, for aught that appeared, by no means a conspicuous or influential character —and from whom the institution had nothing to fear. But, sir, I found him *settled*, the *fever had seized him;* argument or expostulation was useless—they only served to increase the flame, I therefore thought it prudent to change the subject—and shortly left him, apparently *fixed* in a most uncharitable, and to even himself, a most tormenting belief.

Now, sir, I ask what may you not do with the aid of 7000 dollars, among a community the most respectable of whom are thus unreasonably excited, and ready to countenance any measure, and aid in any project, which a mistaken zeal may suggest, to accomplish the object sought? Dangerous indeed would be the effect of this reward in such hands.

Not long since the committee on courts of justice, of which I have the honor of being chairman, were called on by a resolution of the house, to inquire into the expediency of prohibiting the execution of felons in publick. The committee reported a bill limiting the number of spectators of such scenes; believing it to be called for, and satisfied that the vast numbers who usually attend publick executions, congregated together, increase the facilities to the commission of crime; injure the publick morals, and augment rather than diminish the criminal calendar.

A few days after this bill was introduced, I received an anonymous letter, post marked at Batavia, evidently written in a disguised hand, cautioning me how I protected the masons; stated that the object of the bill was well understood; that it was introduced with no other view than to shield masons from the disgrace of a publick execution; and afford an opportunity to escape, &c. and concluded by saying, "*It will not do, sir*; *masons must be hung in publick.*"

I mention these things to show the extent of the excitement, and the height to which it has been raised, and the danger of increasing it still higher by this pecuniary reward.

And sir when in addition to all this, you see the grand jury of Monroe county engaged in a session of five days, exclusively devoted to the subject of Morgan's abduction, and the circumstances connected therewith, examining more than 20 witnesses, without being able to obtain facts or proof sufficient to justify a solitary indictment, and when only two weeks afterwards, another grand jury is assembled, and in a short time present seventeen bills (an ominious number) against as many persons, who are said to be implicated in this affair; what other conclusion can you draw, than that the failure in the first instance only served to increase the ferment in the publick mind; and that the *second* jury, driven

away in the whirlwind of this increased excitement, and popular clamour, did exactly what the first would, had they been operated upon by *equal force*. And, sir, if you add to all the fuel which now feeds this general flame, the prospect of great pecuniary gain, you invite *perjury* upon the stand; and innocence itself may be the victim of *that perjury*; and *that* borne out and justified by the very flame which your reward has increased, if not produced.

Sir, when Huddleston, the Sheriff of Schoharie was murdered; his body found, identified, and the murderer had fled—a reward of 500 dollars was found sufficiently large to ensure his caption; although he had many days in advance of his pursuers—perambulated the northern part of your state, Lower and Upper Canada; and was finally caught on Lake Erie.

It seems from the documents which have been read, that a man by the name of Bruce, and who I believe is sheriff of Niagara county, is implicated or suspected. I presume he is a mason; and that of itself in this inflammatory region would seem to be almost sufficient to justify his execution. But when connected with the fact, that he was at a particular time and place in company with Fox, the stage driver; and that somebody swears that Fox told him that Bruce said Morgan was along; when, I say, these things are known, and this suspicion exists, a less sum than 7000 dollars would be sufficient to *elevate Bruce* under the gallows.

On the whole, sir, I am decidedly of opinion that we had better let the subject alone. As to the resolution which proposes to organize a travelling court to perambulate that country, and thus keep up this fever, the project is too wild and too dangerous to be seriously advocated for a moment. I therefore hope the resolutions will at once be rejected.

Mr. Mosely.—Conscious as I am, sir, that this committee is impatient, and that it will be unkind to detain you longer; yet as I am now called upon to record my vote upon a question of much intrinsick importance, and which has produced so much excitement, I am bound to give some of the reasons for that vote. And as that vote will be found in the negative, it is due to myself to state that I am not connected

with the institution to which allusion has been made; and although constrained to vote against the passage of the resolutions, yet, sir, some of the remarks which have been made in debate, must remain the subject of much regret.

The inexpediency of legislative interference upon this subject, has been already sufficiently made to appear. But although it may be inexpedient to legislate upon it, either by bill or resolution, yet sir, there is a law of much more binding force than any enactment produced by a vote of a majority of this house. To that law, you and I and all of us, must submit. By it I am willing that my own conduct should be judged; and that law is, *publick opinion*. Yes sir, publick opinion is the paramount law of the land. It chains down the strong, supports the weak, protects the innocent, and imposes severe penalties upon the transgressor—penalties more efficacious in their effects than any which can be embodied in your criminal code. The publick feeling has received a wound which requires a speedy correction.

If this most melancholy transaction had happened in the county of Onondaga, it would have required no precept from a magistrate to have summoned to this man's aid sufficient power to afford him relief. Nor would the last scene of this tragedy have been carried to the length to which there is so much reason to apprehend it has been.

I presume not to lift the veil which has for so many centuries hung around an institution, venerable at least for its antiquity, and for aught I know, harmless, if not beneficial. But it must not be denied that there is associated with it, or with some of its members, a transaction which no man can reflect upon with composure. The liberty, if not the life of a fellow citizen, has been taken from him. To those more intimately connected with him, the very doubt which hangs on the subject, must add another pang to the keenness of despair. In a government where so much depends upon publick opinion, I shall be altogether mistaken, if it shall not be found for the interest and reputation of the institution, that the truth be disclosed. If William Morgan is alive, let him be restored to his family and society; if he is dead, let the silence of his grave no longer protect from punishment those

who put him away. It is however not within my purpose to connect this transaction with the masonick institution. From any testimony yet disclosed, it would be unjust to do so: and whatever the hand of time shall yet unfold, will be passed upon by that paramount tribunal, with unerring rectitude.

But, sir, what are you about to do? If we will recur back only to some period of modern history, and that too, of our own country, we shall find sufficient admonition to caution in the discharge of our publick duties. Even in that land where our pilgrim forefathers first planted themselves to enjoy the liberty of conscience, it was not long before some strong delusion overspread the publick mind, which infected all classes of people from the learned prelate down to the most unlettered domestick. The arm of civil government was called in to aid in inflicting punishment for crimes which existed only in distempered imaginations. And the records of a portion of history, remain only as evidences of the ignorance and fanaticism of the people. And are we not now to erect an inquisitorial tribunal unknown to our constitution, and at war with the spirit of our institutions? Nay, will it not be an inquisitorial tribunal, if not equally sanguinary in its punishments, yet in its objects and modes of action similar in principle to a Spanish Inquisition? You can recollect, sir, there was a time when the friends of civil liberty rejoiced at the destruction of a Bastile. If you pass these resolutions, there may be a time when we shall regret the vote which gave them existence. Rather let every good citizen unite in a firm and vigorous execution of existing laws, and which will be altogether more efficacious than paper resolutions.

The Speaker, *Gen. Root.*—This extraordinary legislation is to be justified, I suppose, if justified at all, by the great excitement that prevails in the western parts of the state, against the murderers of Morgan, and freemasons in general, and this house is called upon to assume the exercise of judicial and executive functions. Evidence has been collected for the purpose of inducing the belief that Morgan has been taken off by violent hands; but why should we, in a legislative capacity, interfere in the matter? Why not leave it to

our judicial tribunals? It is said great excitement is pervading the community; but why this excitement? Suppose him murdered: Are not our laws in force in the western parts of this state? Are not our courts open, before whom offenders may be arraigned, and by whom they may be consigned to the punishment due to their crimes? But it is not strange that there should be this excitement, considering the population; some are from the land of steady habits, some from the land of notions, some from the Jerseys, and some from Penn's land; but because they are excited, it is not necessary that the legislature should attach blame where none is deserved. There has been great excitement in this region before now; hand-bills were circulated, headed by large capitals, "*The Grand Canal in danger!*" and the people were excited; men have been burnt in effigy, and since then other excitements have existed; but the legislature should not therefore usurp judicial powers.

That Morgan's liberty was violated, has been proved, and condign punishment has been inflicted on the offenders against the majesty of the laws. They are now receiving the punishment due to the offence,in the prison of Ontario. But it is said Morgan is murdered. If so, detect the perpetrators of the crime, and punish them according to law. If he is murdered, the murderers have forfeited their necks. But a few days since an individual in Delaware, by committing the crime of arson, forfeited his life, as much so as the murderer of Morgan. He escaped. Would you send a committee of the legislature in pursuit of him? We read frequently of murders being perpetrated; are committees of the legislature upon all such occasions to be sent in pursuit of the murderers? No, sir; but for this excitement such a measure would not be thought of. Men are seeking to convert this subject into a political affair, and for the purpose of excluding masons from publick offices,masons are represented as setting your courts and your laws at defiance. I have not belonged to any lodge for many years, though more than thirty years since I was initiated. Is it to be believed that freemasons have conspired to commit murders and to shield murderers from punishment? No, sir; the object is to keep

masons out of office, and those who raise the breeze, to occupy the places of honour and profit. The women, too, are excited: they hold their meetings, and pass resolutions—among others, that their daughters shall not marry freemasons, and, therefore, the legislature must erect an inquisition to search out and detect those murdering masons. It is true that we have courts and district attorneys, and cannot freemasons who are guilty of violations of law, be brought to justice? Are our courts too feeble to bring the offenders to justice? Will a committee of the legislature have more power than a court of justice? This is strengthening the arm of justice with a vengeance. The sword of justice will be but feebly borne by such an arm. You give your committee power to send for persons and papers; but how are they to bear the sword of justice with any effect? they send a subpœna to a person to appear before this grand inquisition; he disobeys; must they go and drag him by the ears before them, or must they wait until the next session of the legislature—make a report of the contempt of their process, and pray that the serjeant of arms may be despatched to bring up the person in contempt! But it may be another legislature, and they may not consider disobedience to such process in as high contempt as the present legislature; it may, however, be this same legislature, if the honourable the senate should condescendingly grant us an extra session; but if it is so, what will you do with the contumacious witness? You may send him to yonder prison, and there you would have a right to keep him, while the legislature remained in session, but no longer.

The first resolution authorises the governour to issue his proclamation offering 5000 dollars in addition, I suppose, to the 1000 dollars already offered for a sight of Morgan, and 2000 dollars for the conviction of his murderers. We do not know that he has been despatched. From the evidence before us, we may suspect that he has suffered from violent hands. During the prevalance of this excitement, is there no danger that an innocent man may suffer on the gallows in consequence of so great a reward being offered to produce a conviction? Is perjury not to be feared while publick ex-

citement is so strong, and when publick feeling is prepared to countenance and screen the perjurer? It would seem that the publick desire some one's life; hang somebody, they say, whether guilty or innocent; let Barabbas go, but crucify him, crucify him. It is dangerous policy; it is bidding a reward for perjury; it is putting innocence in jeopardy. It is said that the resolution should pass, because the governour is limited by the existing laws in the amount of the reward he can offer; he cannot exceed 2000 dollars, and he has gone the whole length of his authority: the legislature surely would not give him more money to swear innocence on the gallows.

The legislature should keep within the legitimate bounds of their authority. Inquiries of this nature to search for evidence have not been instituted, except as preparatory to the impeachment of publick officers, or for the purpose of ascertaining whether the existing laws on any particular subject required to be and could be made more perfect; but in a case like the present, a committee of the legislature should be appointed a court, an itinerant grand jury, to inquire and present, a jury and judges to try and condemn, though I believe it is not asked that they should also execute their sentence, is hitherto unheard of. To keep up the excitement, a memorial has been drawn up and presented to the legislature, and the projector of it, I venture to say, is an emigrant from the neighbourhood of Boston. Why should we permit ourselves to partake of this excitement, and authorize a proceeding which was never thought of before, though crimes of as deep dye and alarming character have heretofore been perpetrated? And why resort to this proceeding, which defeats its object? Pass these resolutions and you publish to all who may be concerned, we are coming, and we now give you notice to depart or you will be brought up before the Inquisition. The measure is novel; it is dangerous; it is an usurpation of the functions of another branch of the government, and above all, it is inefficient.

The first resolution, by authorizing so great a reward, opens a door to perjury. Perjury may grow out of it, and it may be questionable whether, even if it should pass, considering that the governour has already issued a proclamation

offering a reward of 2000 dollars for the discovery of Morgan, or the conviction of his murderers.

Besides, the evidence before us is of a very indefinite character; it rests almost exclusively on hearsay. I doubt whether we should legislate at all upon the subject.

Mr. Granger said he had hoped that in the discussion of this question, the very existence of masonry would be kept out of view, and that these resolutions would be acted upon without reference to the character or conduct of any secret association. No allusion had been made to that institution by the committee, either in their report, or in calling the attention of the house to the consideration of the resolutions proposed. They had denounced none; they had spoken of the transaction as a violation of the rights of a citizen, owing allegiance to and protected by our government; and he must be allowed to express his surprise and regret, that a discussion on masonry had been introduced by those who oppose the resolutions.

The gentleman from Jefferson (Mr. Bucklin) addressed you in a manner calculated to create a belief that an honest jury could not be found in the west, and that an innocent freemason's life was not safe. And why? Because a person on learning that the honourable gentleman was a mason, had charged him with knowing the fate of Morgan, and some other misguided zealot had sent him an anonymous letter, charging him, as chairman of the judiciary committee, with having introduced a bill with the intention to prevent the publick execution of masons. Is this the way to meet the resolutions? As well might I urge their passage upon the ground that I had heard masons, and many of them, declare, that this man had deserved his fate, and that they had a right to deal with their own members in their own way. Such expressions I have considered as proceeding from those who were neither honest masons, nor honest men, although they have been common. Heaven forbid that they should here be charged upon an institution, among whose members are ranked many of my most valued friends. Yet such a course would be as generous as the one adopted by the gentleman from Jefferson.

Let these resolutions stand or fall upon fair ground. What are the facts connected with this act of violence? A peaceful citizen of this state is arrested and taken fifty miles from his house; in his seizure and removal are engaged men who under ordinary circumstances would never have been found in the *posse* of a constable; he is imprisoned; by the same persons he is released from his confinement, and taken, no one knows whither! For seven months all efforts to discover his fate have been ineffectual. Those who took him from the jail have confessed their participation in that transaction, but deny all knowlege of his subsequent fate. It is not proved that he was taken to Niagara, but there is strong ground for such a belief. When we consider that the persons connected with this transaction were those standing fair in the community; the strong inducements that exist to tempt them to his restoration, was it in their power; that it is the only means by which they can save themselves and their respectable families from disgrace and ruin; we have a right, we are compelled to believe, that this citizen has been forced to a foreign country, or that his life has been taken. Under such circumstances, I ask whether a case is not presented of a character so extraordinary, as to require extraordinary means for its developement.

Again, I repeat, that I carry on no crusade against any institution, nor would I implicate its *innocent* members. From the first part of this inquiry, I have avoided any allusion to Free Masonry, nor should I now speak of it, had not some of its members who oppose these resolutions, seen fit to place it in such bold relief.

Mr. Skinner moved to amend the report by inserting the sum of 3000 dollars instead of 5000 dollars, as the reward to be offered for the discovery of Morgan, or the detection of his murderers, if dead. Mr. S. remarked, that by reducing the amount of the reward, the temptation to perjury would be lessened. He himself, however, feared no such consequences from the reward, as was apprehended by gentlemen who had addressed the committee. He thought it due to the petitioners that something should be done by the legislature, and it was due to the people of the state that all the consti-

tuted authorities should evince their willingness to co-operate in the detection of offenders.

Mr. Hay remarked that the reduction of the sum did not obviate the objection. Until he should forget Titus Oates, he could not vote for the first resolution. All history shows that rewards of this kind are the worst species of subornation of perjury.

The question was put on the adoption of the resolutions, and they were rejected—the first, noes 76, ayes 26; the second, noes 74, ayes 23.

The wisdom of the Assembly in refusing to pass the resolutions offered by Mr. Granger must be obvious to the most casual observer. No legislative act could reach an offence already committed. Of course it was unnecessary to legislate upon the subject, unless with a view to increase the excitement. The folly, danger, and depravity of doing which, as well as the folly, danger, and depravity of offering large rewards to informers, has often been exemplified in English history, and in no instance so effectually as in case of the Popish Plot, to which I beg liberty to refer the reader. It will be found in a subsequent chapter, and deserves attentive perusal.

CHAPTER XIII.

Progress of the excitement—Town Meetings—Denunciations of Masons—and of the Masonick Clergy.

While the exertions of said committee were confined to the detection and punishment of offenders, they received, as already remarked, the approbation of all honest, candid, and intelligent men. And had the object for which they were appointed, been strict-

ly adhered to, they would unquestionably have laid the foundation for much applause. Some of the prime movers in this affair indicated, however, by their conduct at an early day, that such were not their sole intentions.

The avidity with which the most improbable tales were greedily devoured by a large portion of community—the malignity which marked the conduct of some members of that committee, in the circulation of falsehoods however base, passing without rebuke, and the impunity which they apparently enjoyed in doing acts, which at any other time, and under any other circumstances, would have branded their authors with deserved contempt, induced them to believe that now was the favourable time to commence their march to empire.

Meetings were therefore called by their advice and under their directions, in almost every town in this and the adjacent counties, for the ostensible purpose of devising means to detect the guilty, and raising funds to aid and assist the widow and the orphans. The meetings, however, when assembled, instead of attending to the business for which they were professedly called, indulged themselves in the most angry vituperations against the whole fraternity—passed the most inflammatory resolutions against masons in general—denounced them as unworthy of publick confidence—and usually closed by nominating candidates for office, at the several town meetings then approaching.

A meeting of this kind was held at Middlebury, in the county of Genesee, on the 21st day of February, 1827, as stated in their printed proceedings, "for the

purpose of taking into consideration the late masonick outrages, and to make nominations to fill the different offices in said town."

A meeting was held in the town of Poultney, in the county of Steuben, at which it was among other things "Resolved, that they would not hear any free-mason preach, unless said preacher should refuse to meet with any Lodge of free-masons, and should openly and boldly declare, that the institution of masonry is a bad institution."

The citizens of Pultney were not in that respect alone. Similar resolutions were adopted elsewhere. Clergymen were dismissed--the relations which had existed for years between the Pastor and his flock, were burst assunder--brethren of the same church, "who had twined as 'twere in unity," refused to partake of the holy sacrament, so long as it was tainted by a mason's presence—the dearest connexions in civil and social life were severed in twain--brother was armed against brother, citizen against citizen, and neighbour against neighbour. The groans of Calvary were lost, and the precepts of the Redeemer forgotten amid the universal cry of "where is Morgan."

As a specimen of the resolutions passed at such meetings, I insert the following:

At a meeting of the citizens of the town of Elba, in the county of Genesee, held at the house of John Wyllis, on the 3d day of March, 1827, of which Simeon Hosmer was chairman, and Daniel Woodward secretary, it was, among other things,

Resolved, "That they would not support any person for any office, either in town, county or state, or

any minister of the gospel who is a member of the fraternity."

At a meeting of the citizens of the town of Covington, in the county of Genesee, held on the 10th day of March, 1827, of which Walter Bonney was chairman, and Robert Watson secretary, it was, among other things,

Resolved, "That we deem free-masons, as such, unfit for any office of trust or confidence, in town, county or state."

At a meeting of a large and respectable number of legal voters, of the town of Cambria, in the county of Niagara, held at the house of John Gould, on the 17th day of February, 1827, of which Eliakim Hammond was chairman, and John Groves secretary, it was, among other things,

Resolved, "That in our opinion, (considering all the attendant circumstances,) the leading characters of the masonick fraternity must have been connected in, and approved of, the abduction of Morgan--therefore we consider it our duty to withhold our support from any of the members of that institution, for any office of town, county, or state." *

*At the town meeting held in Batavia, in April, 1827, Col. William Davis, a member of the Lewiston convention, a republican, and gentleman of high respectability, became a candidate for supervisor, in opposition to Mr. Bush, the regularly nominated anti-masonick candidate. Col. Davis, however, had been so unfortunate as not to discover marks of blood on a piece of plank, brought from fort Niagara and presented to Mrs. Morgan, which had, for a long time, been immersed in tan bark, and was therefore proscribed, and denounced as a recreant to their cause, in the Advocate, printed by Col. Miller, in the following terms:—

"I have just learned from a source entitled to full credit, that William Davis is to be a candidate for Supervisor of the town of Batavia. Mr. Davis, I understand, assigns as a rea-

More than a hundred different meetings, and probably more than a thousand such, were held in the infected territory, at which resolutions of similar import were triumphantly passed. Newspapers were established to give them currency. The basest falsehoods and the most inflammatory appeals filled their columns, and were read with an interest before unknown.

The effect of all this may perhaps be conceived by the distant reader, but cannot well be described.—Strangers living remote from the scene, it will hardly be supposed, can credit their relation, unless by the aid of history. It cannot therefore, be improper to suspend for a moment the progress of our narrative to trace the progress and consider the effect of popular excitement in other countrys than our own.

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son for his submitting to be a tool for freemasons, that he dislikes Mr. Bush, and would rather have Mr. Baker elected. Mr. Davis does not wish to be elected himself, but wishes to defeat the election of Mr. Bush. I think the people who appointed Mr. Davis one of the committee to investigate the late outrages, had better withdraw their misplaced confidence from such a recreant to their cause. Let them look well to it that their ranks are not divided and their force destroyed. I hope the people will understand this corrupt combination between the masons and some few dough-faced anti-masons. If the poople are true to their own cause they will triumph."

Mr. Bush, who is a very respectable man, was elected, but refusing to comply with the requisitions of anti-masons relative to masonick Jurors was afterwards proscribed—and in 1828, Mr. Williams was elected in opposition to Mr. Bush; during his administration Masons were returned as incompetent Jurors, and in 1829 the people of Batavia having resumed their reason, elected Maj. Sutherland as supervisor, by a majority of 29 over Mr. Williams.

CHAPTER XIV.

Popular excitement—the Popish Plot.

To assist the readers of this Narrative, and particularly those remote, in giving credit to some of its statements in relation to the degree and effect of the anti-masonick excitement in this vicinity, I have thought proper to present for their perusal some well authenticated cases of popular excitement from History. Although not immediately connected with the subject before us, they contain a striking illustration of the principles and practices which for two years have been taught with great industry in the infected district, and therefore present a theme for much profitable reflection.

The existence of popular excitement is no phenomenon. History is replete with examples. During the reign of Nero, Rome was set on fire by the direction of that Tyrant, and the crime charged upon the Christians, then resident in that metropolis. As they were an unpopular and persecuted sect, the charge obtained extensive currency, and multitudes perished by slow and lingering torments, for an offence of which they were as innocent as the babe in its cradle.

Religion, not as taught by our Saviour, but as practised by those who pretend to be his followers, has evinced in every age a desire to persecute. Hence "its altars have burned brightest when human victims fed the flame." Hence those great popular excitements which formerly changed the seat of Empire, and converted this globe into a theatre of hor-

rour. Hence the massacre on the eve of St. Bartholomew's day, when thousands of innocent, unsupecting victims, fell a sacrifice to papal fury. Hence the Crusades, which for a time convulsed Europe to its centre, and precipitated the whole Christian world in arms on Asia; and hence too that tremendous excitement which enabled "Mahomet and his disciples, arrayed in armour and blood, to ride in triumph o'er the spoils of thousands slain by his victorious sword."

It is needless on this occasion to refer to that scene when artful and designing leaders induced a Jewish populace to exclaim, "crucify Him, crucify Him," or to go back to a remoter period and trace the cause of that excitement which presented the poisoned cup to the lips of Socrates, because instances of more recent date disgrace the annals of every nation, not excepting even the one in which we live.

Christianity was introduced into Britain at an early day. The Catholicks, so long as they had the power, issued their papal bulls against all who refused to bow at their shrine. The protestant religion having at length succeeded and become paramount in the state, the poor Catholick felt its wrath. Numerous laws with severe penalties were enacted, and enforced with a rigour which makes humanity weep. The nation was for a time about equally divided between the two rival sects, and which ever prevailed was sure to persecute all its opponents.

During, however, the time of Cromwell, the Protestant sect obtained the ascendancy, and in the reign of Charles the 2d, who succeeded Cromwell, the people had become so prejudiced against the papists, and

apparently so fearful of their ascendancy, that some mysterious design was suspected in every movement, enterprise, and profession of that monarch--hence the Popish Plot.

The Gunpowder Plot had taken place some time in the year 1604, and those concerned in it had confessed their guilt, and mostly perished on the scaffold.

The disposition of men's minds, during the reign of Charles the 2d, (1678) predisposed them, even without proof, to believe in another. Hence, says Hume, in his history of England, volume iv. page 311, "A plot all of a sudden struck their ears--they were awakened from their slumber, and like men affrightened and in the dark, took every figure for a spectre. The terror of each man became the source of terror to another, and an universal panick being diffused, reason and argument, and common sense and common humanity, lost all influence over them."

On the 12th of August 1678, says this elegant historian, one Kirby accosted the king as he was walking in the Park, "Sir," said he, "keep close within your company, your enemies have a design upon your life, and you may be shot in this very walk." Being asked the cause of this extraordinary speech, he said, that "Grove and Pickering had engaged to shoot the king, and Sir George Wakeman, the Queen's physician, to poison him." This intelligence he added had been communicated to him by Doctor Tongree, whom, if permitted, he would introduce to his Majesty. Tongree was a divine of the Church of England, active, restless, full of projects, and void of understanding. He brought papers to the King, which

contained information of the supposed plot. The King sent them to the Treasurer, Lord Danby, and ordered the two informers to lay the business before that minister. They did so, and the King and his minister were both satisfied of the imposture. Here the matter would probably have rested, but for the interferance of the King's brother--he however, sent for Kirby and Tongue, and found them living in connextion with Titus Oates, who was said to have conveyed the first intelligence to Tongue.

Oates affirmed that he had fallen under suspicion with the Jesuits--that he had received three blows with a stick, and a box on the ear from the provincial of that order, for revealing their conspiracy, and that overhearing them speak of their intentions to punish him more severely, he had withdrawn and concealed himself. This man, in whose breast was lodged the fate of kings and kingdoms, was allowed to remain in such necessity, that Kirby was obliged to supply him with daily bread, and it was a joyful surprise to him, when he heard that the Council was at last disposed to take some notice of his intelligence. But as he expected more encouragement from the publick than from the King or his minister, he thought proper, before he was presented to the Council, to go with his two companions to see Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey, a noted and active Justice of the Peace, and to give evidence before him of all the articles of the conspiracy.

Oates' narrative upon oath, before Godfrey, the Justice, contained numerous specifications of the intended plot, and among other things, he stated that Grove and Pickering had been employed to shoot the King with silver bullets--that the former was to re-

ceive the sum of fifteen hundred pounds, and the latter, being a pious man, was to receive 30,000 masses, which estimating masses at a shilling a piece, amounted to a like value.

Oates, the informer of this dreadful plot, was the son of an Anabaptist preacher--had been indicted for perjury, and escaped--was afterwards a chaplain on board the fleet, whence he had been dismissed on complaint of some unnatural practices not fit to be named. He then became a convert to the Catholicks, as he afterwards boasted, in order to betray them--was received by them into St. Omer's college, from whence he was also dismissed, and finally, from resentment, or want and indigence, he was induced, in combination with Tongue, to contrive the plot of which he accused the Catholicks.

This abandoned man, when examined before the Council, betrayed his impostures in such a manner as would have utterly discredited the most consistent story, and the most reputable witnesses. Still, on account of the prejudice against Catholicks, great attention was paid to his evidence, and the plot soon became the subject of conversation and the object of terror.

Coleman's papers being seized, and containing, as it was supposed, evidence of the conspiracy, though nothing of that kind was apparent to the unprejudiced eye, diffused still more the panick with which the nation began already to be seized. Men reasoned more from their fears and their passions, than from the evidence before them.

There was danger, however, lest time might open the eyes of the publick; when the murder of Godfrey

completed the general delusion, and rendered the prejudices of the nation absolutely incurable. This magistrate had been missing some days; and, after much search, and many surmises, his body was found lying in a ditch, at Primrose hill: the marks of strangling was thought to appear about his neck, and some contusions on his breast: his own sword was sticking in the body; but, as no considerable quantity of blood ensued, on drawing it, it was concluded, that it had been thrust in after his death, and that he had not killed himself: he had rings on his fingers, and money in his pocket: It was, therefore, inferred, that he had not fallen into the hands of robbers. Without further reasoning, the cry rose, that he had been assassinated by the papists, on accounts Oate's evidence. This clamour was quickly propagated, and met with universal belief. The panick spread itself, on every side, with infinite rapidity; and all men, astonished with fear, and animated with rage, saw, in Godfrey's fate, all the horrible designs ascribed to the catholicks; and no farther doubts remained of Oates' veracity. The voice of the nation united against that hated sect; and, notwithstanding that the bloody conspiracy was supposed to be now detected, men could scarcely be persuaded, that their lives were yet in safety. Each hour teemed with new surmises.—Invasions from abroad, insurrections at home, even private murders and poisonings were apprehended. To deny the reality of the plot, was to be an accomplice: to hesitate, was criminal: royalist, republican; churchman, sectary; courtier, patriot; all parties concurred in the illusion. The city prepared for its defence, as if the enemy were at its gates; the

chains and posts were put up: and, it was a noted saying, at that time, of Sir Thomas Player, the chamberlain, that, were it not for these precautions, all the citizens might rise, next morning, with their throats cut.

In order to propagate the popular phrensy, several artifices were employed. The dead body of Godfrey was carried into the city, attended by vast multitudes. It was publickly exposed in the streets, and viewed by all ranks of men; and every one, who saw it, went away inflamed, as well by the mutual contagion of sentiments, as by the dismal spectacle itself. The funeral pomp was celebrated with great parade. The corpse was conducted through the chief streets of the city: seventy-two clergymen marched before; above a thousand persons of distinction, followed after: and, at the funeral sermon, two able-bodied divines, mounted the pulpit, and stood on each side of the preacher, lest, in paying the last duties to this unhappy magistrate, he should, before the whole people, be murdered, by the papists.

In this disposition of the nation, reason could no more be heard, than a whisper in the midst of a most violent hurricane. Godfrey's murder by the papists, was generally believed. A proclamation was issued by the king, offering a pardon and a reward of 500*l*, to any one who should discover his murderers, and as it was afterwards surmised, that the terror of a like assassination would prevent discovery, a new proclamation was issued, promising absolute protection to any one who should reveal the secret. Thus was indemnity, money and security, offered to the fairest bidder.

While the nation was in this ferment, the Parliament assembled. The king in his speech, mentioned the plot which had been formed against his life, but declined giving his opinion, lest he should say too much or too little.

The plot was immediately echoed from one house to the other. The authority of Parliament gave sanction to that fury with which the people were already agitated, an address was voted for a solemn fast—a form of prayer was contrived for that solemnity, and because the popish plot had been omitted in the first draught, it was carefully ordered to be inserted, lest omniscience, to use the words of an historian, should want intelligence.

In order to continue and propagate the alarm, addresses were voted for laying before the house, such papers as might discover the horrible conspiracy—for the removal of Popish recusants from London—for administering every where the oaths of allegiance and supremacy—for denying access at Court, to all unknown and suspicious persons, and for appointing the trainbands of London and Westminster to be in readiness. The popish Lords, Stafford and others, were committed to the Tower, and both houses, after hearing Oates' evidence, voted, "that the Lords and Commons are of opinion that there hath been, and still is, a damnable and hellish plot contrived and carried on by the popish recusants, for assassinating the king, for subverting the government, and for rooting out and destroying the protestant religion."

Oates, who, though his evidence were true, must, by his own account, be regarded as an infamous villain, was, by every one, applauded, caressed, and

called the saviour of the nation. He was recommended by the parliament to the king. He was lodged in Whitehall, one of the royal palaces, was protected by guards, and encouraged by a pension of twelve hundred pounds a year.

It was not long before such bountiful encouragement brought forth new witnesses. William Bedloe, a man if possible, more infamous than Oates, appeared next upon the stage. He pretended in the first instance, to give intelligence only of Godfrey's murder, but afterwards emboldened by the general fury, he accused the popish Lords, then confined in the Tower. Encouraged still more by the success which apparently accompanied all their efforts, Oates and Bedloe accused the Queen of entering into a design against the life of her husband. The king determined, as he said, "not to see an innocent woman abused," ordered Oates to be strictly confined, his papers to be seized, and his servants dismissed; and this daring informer was obliged to make application to parliament, in order to recover his liberty.

Coleman soon afterwards, was brought to trial—Oates and Bedloe deposed against him, and although not entitled to any credit whatever, on account of their characters, the improbabilities and inconsistencies of their story, Coleman received sentence of death. The sentence was afterwards executed upon him. He suffered with calmness and constancy, and to the last, persisted in his innocence.

Father Ireland's conviction succeeded that of Coleman's, and was produced by the testimony of Oates and Bedloe. Grove and Pickering were condemned at the same time. All these men, before their ar-

raignment, were condemned in the opinion of the Judges, jury and spectators ; and to be a catholick, was of itself sufficient proof of guilt. When the jury brought in a verdict of guilty, the Chief Justice, Sir William Scroggs, said, "You have done gentlemen, like very good subjects, and good christians, that is to say, like very good Protestants, and now, much good may their thirty thousand masses do them." Alluding to the masses by which Pickering was to be rewarded for murdering the king. All these men went to execution protesting their innocence, a circumstance which made no impression on the spectators.

Hill, Green and Berry, were afterwards tried for Godfrey's murder, convicted on Bedloe's testimony, and executed, protesting to the last in their innocence. Berry died a protestant. Instead however, of its giving a check to the publick credulity, men were only surprised, that a protestant could be induced at his death, to presist in so manifest a falsehood ; and the blood already shed on account of the Popish plot, instead of satiating the people, served only as an incentive to their fury, and each conviction of a criminal was regarded as new proof of those horrible designs which they supposed, and were determined at all events to believe, had before existed.

The credit of the popish plot still stood upon the oaths of a few infamous witnesses. Though such immense preparations were supposed to have been made in the very bowels of the kingdom, no traces of them, after the most rigorous inquiry, had as yet appeared. Though so many thousands, both abroad and at home, had been engaged in the dreadful secret, neither hope nor fear, nor remorse, nor levity, nor suspicion, nor

private resentment, had engaged any one to confirm the evidence. Though the informers pretended, that even after they resolved to betray the secret, many treasonable commissions and papers had passed thro' their hands, they had not the precaution to keep any one of them, in order to fortify their testimony. But all these difficulties and a thousand more, were not found too hard of digestion by the nation and parliament. The house of Commons offered further rewards to new discoveries, not considering the danger which they incurred, of granting bribes to perjury. A pamphlet having been published to discredit the informers, and to vindicate the Catholick Lords in the Tower, these Lords were required to discover the author, and thereby to expose their own advocate to prosecution; and both houses concurred in renewing the former vote, that the papists had undoubtedly entered into a horrid and treasonable conspiracy against the king, the state, and the protestant religion.

This extreme violence in the prosecution of so absurd an imposture, disgraces the noble cause of liberty, in which the parliament was engaged. We may even, says Hume, "conclude from such impatience of contradiction, that the prosecutors themselves retained a secret suspicion, that the general belief was but ill grounded. The politicians among them, were afraid to let in light, lest it might put an end to so useful a delusion. The weaker and less dishonest party took care, by turning their eyes aside, not to see a truth so opposite to those furious passions by which they were actuated and in which they were determined obstinately to persevere.

"There was no interruption to the persecution of

Catholicks accused of the plot. Whitebread, provincial of the Jesuits, Fenwick, Gavan, Turner and Harcourt were the next victims. Oates, Bedloe, and one Dugdale, a new witness, appeared against the prisoners. Although the defendants proved by sixteen witnesses, most of them young men of the highest respectability, that Oates was at St. Omers, when he swore he was in London, their testimony because they were Catholicks, was totally disregarded by the Court and Jury. Their reception in court was full of outrage and mockery, and the Chief Justice, in reply to one of the witnesses, said, "you papists, are taught, not to believe your senses." The prisoners were of course convicted, and afterwards executed, protesting to their last breath, in the most solemn, earnest and deliberate, though disregarded protestations of their innocence.

Langhorne, an eminent, lawyer, was next brought to trial. The witnesses for this unhappy man on approaching the Court, were almost torn in pieces by the rabble—one in particular was bruised to such a degree as to put his life in danger. Another, a woman, declared that unless the Court could afford her protection, she durst not give evidence; but as the Judges could go no farther than promise to punish such as should do her injury, the prisoner himself had the humanity to wave her testimony, and was convicted, the spectators at the same time expressing their savage joy by loud acclamations.

While accusation was equivalent to sentence of death, Sir George Wakeman, the Queen's Physician, was put upon his trial. Oates, although he had previously confessed that he knew nothing against the

prisoner, gave positive evidence of his guilt. The connexion of his cause with the Queen's, who was also accused, made men recollect themselves and recall the good sense and humanity which seemed during some time to have abandoned the nation. The Chief Justice himself, who had hitherto favoured the witnesses, exaggerated the plot, and railed against the prisoners, was considerably molified, and gave a favourable charge to the jury. Sir George Wakeman was acquitted. Oates and Bedloe had the assurance to attack the Chief Justice to his face, and even to accuse him of partiality before the Council. The whole party who had before extolled his conduct, now made him the object of their resentment.

Oates was at length brought to trial for perjury on two indictments—and no criminal was ever convicted on fuller and more undoubted evidence. Twenty-two persons who had been students at St. Omer's, most of them men of credit and family, gave evidence, that Oates was at that seminary at the time he swore he was a witness of the numerous treasons in London—forty-seven witnesses, persons also of untainted character, deposed that Father Ireland was at Staffordshire, when Oates swore that he was in London. Oates' sentence was, to be fined a thousand marks on each indictment, to be whipped on two different days, from Aldgate to Newgate, and from Newgate to Tyburn—to be imprisoned during life, and to be pillored five times in every year.

Thus ended the Popish plot, after the nation had been agitated, its peace and harmony disturbed, and its prosperity interrupted for years. After the blood of some of its subjects had been shed on the scaffold,

without pretence of guilt, save that derived from prejudice and perjury.

CHAPTER XV.

Popular Excitement continued—The Meal-Tub Plot—Trial and execution of Lord Stafford.

Ere the publick mind had acquired repose, the meal-tub plot was conjured up by some necessitous villains, incited by the success of Oates and Bedloe.

There was one Dangerfield,*a fellow who had been burned in the hand for crimes, transported, whipped, pilloried four times, fined for cheats, outlawed for felony, convicted of coining, and exposed to all the publick infamy which the laws could inflict on the basest and most shameful enormities—still the credulity of the people and the humour of the times, enabled this man to become a person of consequence. He was the author of a new incident called the meal-tub plot, from the place where some papers relating to it were found. It only appears, that Dangerfield, under pretence of betraying some of the conspiracies of the presbyterians, had been countenanced by some of the catholicks of condition, and had even been admitted to the duke's presence and the king's: and that, under pretence of revealing new popish plots, he had obtained access to Shaftesbury, and some of the popular leaders. Which side he intended to cheat, is uncertain; or whether he did not rather mean to cheat both: but he soon found, that the belief of the nation was more open to a popish than a presby-

*See Hume, vol. 4, p. 349.

terian plot; and he resolved to strike in with the prevailing humour. Though no weight could be laid on his testimony, great clamour was raised; as if the court, by way of retaliation, had intended to load the presbyterians with the guilt of a false conspiracy.

Juries, however, were not at this time so partial but that reason and justice, even when the popish plot was in question, could sometimes prevail. The Earl of Castlemaine, though accused by Oates (who had not yet been convicted of perjury, as related in the preceding chapter) and Dangerfield, was acquitted. Sir Thomas Gascoigne, accused by two servants whom he had dismissed for dishonesty, received a like verdict. These trials were great blows to the plot, but did not discourage their projectors.—The House of Commons, then in session, prosecuted those accused with the same zeal and the same credulity as their predecessors—renewed the former vote, which affirmed the reality of the horrid plot—and expelled Sir Robert Can and Sir Robert Yeomans from the house, for saying there was no popish but a presbyterian plot. They greatly lamented the death of Bedloe, who had died of a fever at Bristol, and on whose testimony they much depended.

The commons even endeavoured, by their countenance and protection, to remove the extreme infamy with which Dangerfield was loaded, and to restore him to the capacity of being an evidence. The whole tribe of informers they applauded and rewarded; Jennison, Turberville, Dugdale, Smith, la Faria, appeared before them; and their testimony, however frivolous or absurd, met with a favourable reception: the king was applied to, in their behalf, for pensions

and pardons: their narratives were printed, with that sanction which arose from the approbation of the house: Dr. Tongue was recommended for the first considerable church preferment, which should become vacant. Considering men's determined resolution to believe, instead of admiring, that a palpable falsehood should be maintained by witnesses, it may justly appear wonderful that no better evidence was ever produced against the catholicks.

The impeachment of the Catholick lords who had been committed to the Tower for treason, was afterwards revived, and on the 30th of Nov. 1680, it was determined to make viscount Stafford the first victim.

Three witnesses were produced against the prisoner—Oates, Dugdale, and Tuberville.

The clamour and outrage of the populace during the trial, were extreme: great abilities and eloquence were displayed by the managers, sir William Jones, sir Francis Winnington, and sergeant Maynard: yet did the prisoner, under all these disadvantages, make a better defence than was expected, either by his friends or his enemies: the unequal contest in which he was engaged, was a plentiful source of compassion, to every mind seasoned with humanity. He represented that, during a course of forty years, from the very commencement of the civil wars, he had, through many dangers, difficulties and losses, still maintained his loyalty: and was it credible, that now, in his old age, easy in his circumstances, but dispirited by infirmities, he would belie the whole course of his life, and engage against his royal master, from whom he had ever received kind treatment, in the

most desperate and most bloody of all conspiracies? He remarked the infamy of the witnesses; the contradictions and absurdities of their testimony; the extreme indigence in which they had lived, though engaged, as they pretended, in a conspiracy with kings, princes, and nobles; the credit and opulence to which they were, at present, raised. With a simplicity and tenderness, more persuasive than the greatest oratory, he still made protestations of his innocence, and could not forbear, every moment, expressing the most lively surprise and indignation, at the audacious impudence of the witnesses.

It will appear astonishing to us, as it did to Stafford himself, that the peers, after a solemn trial of six days, should, by a majority of twenty-four voices, give sentence against him. He received, however, with resignation, the fatal verdict. *God's holy name be praised*, was the only exclamation which he uttered.—When the high steward told him that the peers would intercede with the king for remitting the more cruel and ignominious parts of the sentence, quartering and hanging, he burst into tears: but he told the lords that he was moved to this weakness by his sense of their goodness, not by any terror of that fate which he was doomed to suffer.

Stafford prepared himself for death with the intrepidity which became his birth and station, and which was the natural result of the innocence and integrity which, during the course of a long life, he had ever maintained: his mind seemed even to collect new force from the violence and oppression under which he laboured. When going to execution, he called for a cloak, to defend him against the rigour of the

season: "Perhaps," said he, "I may shake with cold; but, trust in God, not for fear." On the scaffold he continued with reiterated and earnest asservations, to make protestations of his innocence: all his fervour was exercised on that point: when he mentioned the witnesses whose perjuries had bereaved him of life, his expressions were full of mildness and charity. He solemnly disavowed all those immoral principles which over zealous protestants had ascribed, without distinction, to the church of Rome: and he hoped, he said, that the time was now approaching, when the present delusion would be dissipated; and when the force of truth, though late, would engage the whole world to make reparation to his injured honour.

The populace, who had exulted at Stafford's trial and condemnation, were now melted into tears, at the sight of that tender fortitude which shone forth in each feature, and motion, and accent, of this aged noble. Their profound silence was only interrupted by sighs and groans. With difficulty they found speech to assent to those protestations of innocence which he frequently repeated: "we believe you, my lord! God bless you, my lord!" These expressions with a faltering accent, flowed from them. The executioner, himself, was touched with sympathy. Twice he lifted up the axe, with an intent to strike the fatal blow; and as often he felt his resolution to fail him. A deep sigh was heard to accompany his last effort, which laid Stafford, forever, at rest. All the spectators seemed to feel the blow. And, when the head was held up to them, with the usual cry, *this is the head of a traitor*, no clamour of assent was uttered. Pity, remorse, and astonishment, had taken

possession of every heart, and displayed itself in every countenance.

This is the last blood which was shed, on account of the popish plot: an incident which, for the credit of the nation, it were better to bury in eternal oblivion; but which it is necessary to perpetuate, as well to maintain the truth of history, as to warn, if possible, their posterity, and all mankind, never again to fall into so shameful, so barbarous a delusion.

CHAPTER XVI.

Popular Excitement continued—Elizabeth Canning.

In 1753, (see History of England, vol. 6, page 113) the metropolis of England, and afterwards the whole Kingdom, was thrown into commotion by the revelations of an obscure damsel, whose name was Elizabeth Canning. As some of the features which marked that singular case may possibly be recognized by those residing in this vicinity, I cannot resist the temptation of inserting it entire.

The genius of the English people, says Smollet, in the history above alluded to, is perhaps incompatible with a state of perfect tranquillity; if it is not ruffled by foreign provocations, or agitated by unprofitable measures of domestick administration, it will undergo temporary fermentations from the turbulent ingredients inherent in its own constitution. Tumults are excited, and faction enkindled into rage and inveteracy, by incidents of the most frivolous nature. At

this juncture the metropolis of England was divided and discomposed in a surprising manner, by a dispute in itself of so little consequence to the community, that it could not deserve a place in a general history, if it did not serve to convey a characteristick idea of the English nation. In the beginning of the year an obscure damsel, of low degree, whose name was Elizabeth Canning, promulgated a report, which in a little time attracted the attention of the publick. She affirmed, that on the first day of the new year, at night, she was seized under Bedlam-wall by two ruffians, who having stripped her of her under apparel, secured her mouth with a gag, and threatened to murder her should she make the least noise; that they conveyed her on foot about ten miles, to a place called Enfield-wash, and brought her to the house of one Mrs. Wells, where she was pillaged of her stays; and because she refused to turn prostitute, confined in a cold, damp, separate, and unfurnished apartment; where she remained a whole month, without any other sustenance than a few stale crusts of bread, and about a gallon of water; till at length she forced her way through a window, and ran home to her mother's house, almost naked, in the night of the twenty-ninth of January. This story, improbable and unsupported, operated so strongly on the passions of the people in the neighbourhood of Aldermanbury, where Canning's mother lived, and particularly among fanaticks of all denominations, that they raised voluntary contributions, with surprising eagerness, in order to bring the supposed delinquents to justice. Warrants were granted for apprehending Wells, who kept the house at Enfield-wash, and her accomplices, the

servant maid, whose name was Virtue Hall, and one Squires, an old gipsy woman, which last was charged by Canning, of having robbed her of her stays. Wells, though acquitted of the felony, was punished as a bawd. Hall turned evidence for Canning, but afterwards recanted. Squires, the gipsy, was convicted of the robbery, though she produced undoubted evidence to prove that she was at Abbotsbury, in Dorsetshire, that very night in which the felony was said to be committed, and Canning and her friends fell into divers contradictions during the course of the trial. By this time the prepossession of the common people in her favour had risen to such a pitch of enthusiasm, that the most palpable truths which appeared on the other side, had no other effect than that of exasperating them to the most dangerous degree of rage and revenge. Some of the witnesses for Squires, though persons of unblemished character, were so intimidated that they durst not enter the court; and those who had resolution enough to give evidence in her behalf, ran the risk of assassination from the vulgar that surrounded the place. On this occasion, sir Crisp Gascoyne, lord-mayor of London, behaved with that laudable courage and humanity which ought ever to distinguish the chief magistrate of such a metropolis. Considering the improbability of the charge, the heat, partiality, and blind enthusiasm with which it was prosecuted, and being convinced of the old woman's innocence by a great number of affidavits, voluntarily sent up from the country by persons of unquestionable credit, he, in conjunction with some other worthy citizens, resolved to oppose the torrent of vulgar preju-

dice. Application was made to the throne for mercy: the case was referred to the attorney and solicitor general, who, having examined the evidences on both sides, made their report in favour of Squires to the king and council; and this poor old creature was indulged with his majesty's pardon. This affair was now swelled up into such a faction as divided the greater part of the kingdom, the rich as well as the poor, the high as well as the humble. Pamphlets and pasquinades were published on both sides of the dispute, which became the general topick of conversation in all assemblies, and people of all ranks espoused one or other party with as much warmth and animosity as had ever inflamed the whigs and tories, even at the most rancorous period of their opposition. Subscriptions were opened, and large sums levied, on one side, to prosecute for perjury the persons on whose evidence the pardon had been granted. On the other hand, those who had interested themselves for the gipsy, resolved to support her witnesses, and, if possible, detect the imposture of Canning. Bills of perjury were preferred on both sides. The evidences for Squires were tried and acquitted; at first Canning absconded; but afterwards surrendered to take her trial, and being, after a long hearing, found guilty, was transported to the British colonies. The zeal of her friends, however, seemed to be inflamed by her conviction; and those who carried on the prosecution were insulted, even to the danger of their lives. They supplied her with necessaries of all sorts, paid for her transportation in a private ship, where she enjoyed all the comforts and conveniences that could be afforded in that situation; and furnished

her with such recommendations as secured to her a very agreeable reception in New-England.

CHAPTER XVII.

Popular Excitement continued—Salem Witchcraft.

The cases to which I have referred for the purpose of illustrating the nature, tendency, and effect of popular excitement, to prevent any misconstruction whatever, are related in the language of their respective authors. They teach us an excellenta moral lesson, and if duly estimated, cannot fail, at this time, of producing salutary effects.

In order, however, to show that we are not the only people even in our own country who have been excited, and in order that the disgrace may be shared among a greater number, I will cite one case more out of a multitude of others, and then resume my narrative.

In 1692 the people of Massachusetts were alarmed by the cry of Witchcraft. A strange delusion, and not unlike the present one, except in degree, seized on the minds of our pious and venerable ancestors in that province, and for a while overspread the town of Salem with melancholy gloom. This frenzy continued from March till November, and during that period twenty-two persons received sentence of death for the crime of Witchcraft. Among them was the Rev. George Burroughs, a pastor of the church, and one Giles Cory, an old man, bowed down with years,

who was pressed to death by slow and lingering torments, because he refused to put himself upon trial before a court and jury which had just convicted eight of his fellow prisoners of a similar offence.—While writhing in agony with weights upon his breast, his tongue protruded from his mouth; this the sheriff put back with his cane.

"Every man," says the historian of that day, "was suspicious of his neighbour, and alarmed for himself: business was interrupted. Many fled from their dwellings. Fear was in every countenance, and distress in every heart. Every place was the subject of some direful tale, and the most common incidents received some fanciful construction to cover them with mystery or load them with infamy." The testimony then received, and upon which verdicts of guilty were predicated, would now be considered a burlesque upon judicial proceedings. Still it was deemed conclusive by the courts and juries of that day, and out of twenty-two persons convicted, nineteen were actually hanged for offences which existed only in distempered imaginations. The supposed sufferers, elated with slaughter and emboldened by success, at last accused some of the principal inhabitants of the province.—This roused suspicion from its lethargy—condemnation ceased—the accusers were silent—those under sentence of death were reprieved, and subsequently pardoned. A gentleman of high respectability, on being accused of Witchcraft, commenced an action of slander. This served in part to arrest the progress of the excitement, and taught even accusers moderation.

Some of the informers afterwards begged pardon

"for having brought the guilt of innocent blood upon the land." Twelve Jurors, by whose verdict a worthy man was convicted, some years after, made this publick declaration: "We do signify our deep sense of, and sorrow for, our errours, in acting on such evidence. We pray that we may be considered candidly and aright by the living sufferers, as being then under the power of a strong and general delusion."— An aged woman, Martha Cory, after her condemnation to the gallows, was excommunicated from the church. Her sentence ten years afterwards was by the same church erased from their records. One of the Judges who had been concerned in the condemnation of these unhappy victims, on the day of a publick fast, made a confession in the South Meeting House at Boston, and desired the prayers of the church "on account of the errours into which he had fallen at Salem."

On this subject, Chief Justice Marshall very justly remarks:

"The annals of Massachusetts exhibit one of those wonderful cases of popular delusion, which, infecting every class of society, and gaining strength *from its very extravagance*, triumphing over life, reveal to man his deplorable imbecility, and would teach him, if the experience of others could teach, never to countenance a departure from that moderation, and those safe and sure principles of moral rectitude which have stood the test of time, and have received the approbation of the wise and good in all ages.

"In Great Britain, as well as in America, the opinion has long prevailed that by the aid of malignant spirits, certain persons possessed supernatural pow-

ers, which were usually exercised in the mischievous employment of tormenting others; and the criminal code of both countries was disgraced with laws for the punishment of witchcraft. In the year 1692, this weakness was converted into frenzy: its baneful activity was extended to persons in every situation of life, and many of the most reputable members of society became its victims.

"Some young girls in Boston had accustomed themselves to fall into fits, and had affected to be struck dead on the production of certain popular books, such as the *Assembly's Catechism*, and *Cotton's Milk for Babes*, while they could read Oxford's jests, or Popish and Quaker books, with many others which were deemed profane, without being in any manner affected by them. These pretences, instead of exposing the fraud to instant detection, seemed to have promoted the cheat; and they were supposed to be possessed by demons who were utterly confounded by the production of these holy books. At length an old Irish woman, not of good character, who had given one of these girls some harsh language, and to whom all this diabolical mischief was attributed, was apprehended by the magistrate; and neither confessing nor denying the fact, was, on the certificate of physicians, that she was *compos mentis*, condemned and executed.

"The publick mind being thus predisposed, four girls in Salem complained of being afflicted in the same manner with those in Boston. The physicians, unable to account for the disorder, attributed it to witchcraft, and an old Indian woman in the neighbourhood was selected as the witch. *The attention bestowed*

upon these girls gave them great importance, and not only confirmed them in the imposture, but produced other competitors, who were ambitious of the same distinction. Several other persons were now bewitched. *It was necessary to keep up the agitation already excited*, by furnishing fresh subjects for astonishment; and in a short time the accusations extended to persons in respectable situations. The manner in which the accusations were received, evinced such a degree of publick credulity, that the *impostors* seem to have been convinced of their power to assail with impunity all whom caprice or malignity might select for their victims. If the nearest relatives of the accused manifested either tenderness for their situation, or resentment at the injury done their friends, they drew upon themselves the vengeance of these *profligate impostors*. For accompanying on her examination a wife who had been apprehended, the husband was involved in the same prosecution, and was condemned and executed. The examinations exhibit a deplorable degree of blind infatuation on one side, and of atrocious profligacy on the other, which, if not well attested, could scarcely be supposed to have existed.

Many persons of sober lives and unblemished characters were committed to prison; and the publick prejudices had already pronounced their doom. Against charges of this nature, thus conducted, no defence could possibly be made. To be accused, was to be found guilty. The very grossness of the imposition seemed to secure its success, and the absurdity of the accusation to establish the verity of the charge.

"The consternation became almost universal. It was soon perceived that all attempts to establish innocence must be ineffectual, and the person accused could hope to obtain safety, *only by confessing the truth of the charge, and criminating others.* The extent of crime introduced by such a state of things, almost surpasses belief. Every feeling of humanity is shocked when we learn that to save themselves, *children accused their parents:* in some instances parents their children; and in one case sentence of death was pronounced against a husband on the testimony of his wife. There were examples of persons who, under the terrors of examination, confessed themselves guilty—among the number who were accused, only one person was acquitted. For this he was indebted to one of the girls, who would not join the others in criminating him. By the court of oyer and terminer, a considerable number who were condemned, of whom nineteen protested their innocence, were executed. It is observed by Mr. Hutchinson, that those who were condemned, and not executed, had most probably saved themselves by a confession of their guilt.

"Never (says Chief Justice Marshall) was there given a more melancholy proof of the degree of depravity of which man is capable, when the publick passions countenance crime."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Further progress of the excitement in the infected territory—Exclusion of Masons from Juries—Trial of the Town Clerk of Bethany—Inquisitorial powers assumed—Proceedings in relation to the Holland Land Company.

Although the cases alluded to in the preceding chapters are somewhat lengthy in detail, it is hoped they will not be thought irrelevant, inasmuch as they afford a perfect exposition of the views, feelings, and conduct of a considerable portion of community in this enlightened age.

The popularity of the agents in the production of this excitement, appeared to have no limits. Their influence with the people knew no bounds. Common sense and common humanity were violated to aid its progress. The most sacred rights of masons were trampled under foot, and as Mr. Hume very justly remarks in relation to the popish plot, the people, "like men affrightened and in the dark, took every figure for a spectre. The terror of each man became the source of terror to another—and a general panick being diffused, reason and argument, and common sense and common humanity, lost all influence over them. The torrent of national prejudice ran so high that no one, without the most imminent danger, durst venture openly to oppose it; nay, scarcely any one without great force of judgment could even secretly entertain an opinion contrary to the prevailing sentiments." And as the historians of New-England, when speaking of witchcraft, with equal

propriety observe, "Terrible was the day--every man was suspicious of his neighbour and alarmed for himself. Terror was in every countenance and distress in every heart. Every place was the subject of some direful tale—and the most common incidents received some fanciful construction, to cover them with mystery or load them with infamy."

The torrent of popular prejudice did not, it is true, run with that overwhelming violence it did during the supposed existence of the popish plot, or at the time when some honestly supposed that Witchcraft would obtain the entire ascendancy in New England. The cases, however, in many respects were parallel, and had this excitement occurred in a different age, and among a less enlightened people; had the legislature given it the sanction of their authority; and had the publick mind been familiar with scenes of carnage, it would unquestionably have terminated in the massacre of all masons in the vicinity.

In order to test the publick sensibility on that point, a number of false alarms were spread abroad, either by Col. Miller or his friends, at different times. Individuals supposing that Batavia was made up of cannibals, who having devoured the adjacent country were about to devour each other, flocked hither with loaded arms, for the avowed purpose of fighting the masons. These expedients, however, were of rare occurrence, and did not at the time excite much interest or attention.

Attempts were made to prevent masons from meeting as usual. Taunts, threats, and a variety of other measures were resorted to for that purpose, all however to no effect. The publick mind was not yet prepared for scenes of violence and bloodshed.

It has ever been the custom of masons to meet on the anniversary of St. John the Baptist, and St. John the Evangelist. The constitution of the Grand Lodge requires it. Their right to do so has never, it is believed, till recently, been questioned. In pursuance of this ancient custom, the Batavia Lodge, in May, 1827, announced their intention to celebrate in publick the then approaching anniversary of St. John the Baptist.

The following article thereupon appeared in Col. Miller's paper:

The Masonick Intelligencer of yesterday contains a notice of an intended celebration of St. Johns on the 25th of June next. The notice closes by saying, "The neighbouring Encampments, Chapters and Lodges in their corporate capacities, as well as all Sir Knights, Companions, and Brethren in the vicinity will be invited to attend." There is something in this notice as well as the time of its appearance which ought not to escape publick attention. What is meant by their "corporate capacities?" I have never understood that lodges, or chapters, or even encampments were incorporated institutions—nor can I conceive how they can have "corporate capacities," unless they be in some manner recognized by law. They probably understand it better than the people do.

And besides, why is this notice given so early? It is now more than six weeks to the 25th of June. There is still more mystery about this part of the subject. A few days instead of weeks would be sufficient for all in the vicinity of this place. But their object probably is to give their notice a wide circulation and call together their "tens of thousands" which they have frequently boasted they could command at a moment's warning. What can be the object of calling together so many masons at this place? Whose houses are to be burnt or demolished? Who is to be kidnapped and murdered? If it be necessary to celebrate this masonick festival, why is it not done by the respective lodges in their own

neighbourhood? Where is the necessity of their all congregating at one place? Is it to display their strength, manifest their contempt for the people and set at defiance their power?

They will probably say they have a right to assemble. So they have. And so have the people a right to assemble.—And now I would suggest to the good people of this county, that a general county meeting be held at the court house in Batavia, on the 25th day of June next, to deliberate upon the proper measures to be adopted to secure our rights and persons from masonick encroachment and outrage. It is no time to sleep upon our posts. Eternal vigilance is the only condition upon which liberty is vouchsafed to man. We have seen with what secrecy the masons contrive, and with what facility they execute their plans of vengeance. Eight months have elapsed since a free citizen of our country was kidnapped and torn from his family and his home, and although the active vigilance of a whole community has been enlisted in the investigation, still his fate is wrapped in the dark arcana of masonick mystery. The place of his grave remains undiscovered, and bloody assassins go unpunished. And who is to be the next victim of masonick vengeance time alone must disclose. In this state of things I think the friends of constitutional law and civil liberty should commune together and adopt some measures for their future protection. And that they may see the force with which they have to contend in their struggle to maintain the majesty of the laws, the independence of the country and the rights of the people, let them assemble on the 25th of June. They may then see the masons arrayed in robes of royalty, with sceptres in their hands, and crowns upon their heads, marching through the streets of a republican country.

The Masonick Intelligencer of May 23, 1827, in relation to the above article contains the following remarks:

We did not anticipate, when in a former number we gave notice of our intention to celebrate in publick the anniversary of St. John the Baptist, on the 25th of June, in this village,

that it would have called forth such asperity of remark, or that our right to do so would for a moment be questioned.—Were we, however, to judge from the general tenour of some remarks on that subject in the last number of the "Morgan Investigator, and Advocate," we should of course infer that such a celebration at that time, in this village, is not to be tolerated with impunity. Men who have stood so long "sleepless on the towers of freedom"—who have so often and so loudly proclaimed their patriotism, who have boasted so much of their regard for individual rights and personal freedom, it was to have been expected would be the first to attempt their violation. Still we do not believe that the publick at large are yet prepared to sacrifice masons on the altar of prejudice, or to go all lengths with these pretended patriots in acts of violence and outrage. We think the time is rapidly approaching, and even now is not far distant, when the appellation of "a Brother" will not be a term of reproach.

The recent excitement, originating, we admit, in many cases, from the purest of motives, but which of late, by a combination of all the angry passions, has, we trust, in many instances been perverted to an end for which it was not originally designed by many of the good and respectable men accessary to its formation, appears to be rapidly approximating to a close. Some mighty effort seems therefore indispensable to preserve its existence, in order that the "proprietors" may not, like drunken men on the morning subsequent to a debauch, sink into that state of torpor from which nothing short of the last trumpet can apparently redeem them. An occasion for additional excitement, these proprietors, we presume, fondly anticipate on this anniversary. We trust, however, in that respect they will be egregriously mistaken.

It has ever been a standing rule among masons, sanctioned and approved by centuries, to celebrate this day either in publick or in private. We are not aware that a publick celebration, if properly conducted, (and that this will be so we have no doubt,) ought to excite the animosity of any rational being on earth. Such, then, being our views, we cannot but express our unfeigned satisfaction that it is in contemplation, and we fondly hope that our fellow citizens who are

not masons, will unite in participating the festivities of that day.

We understand that a highly respectable gentlemen has been desired by the committee of arrangements to deliver an address on the occasion. We hope he will accept the invitation; and from his talents, his standing, and his character, we anticipate an exhibition of masonick principles of which the most violent and the most exasperated cannot but sanction and approve.

Col. Miller's paper of the next week contained the following:

"There is much conversation respecting the meeting to take place the 25th of June. The masons have their emblems and signs, and on their aprons and sashes, the Sun, Moon, and stars are engraved. The bright luminary of day throws his beams over our heads, and the moon, with her borrowed light, sheds her beams. It is unnecessary to have the Sun, Moon, and Stars emblazoned on the flags of the people.—The forty-seventh problem of Euclid, and compasses and squares, would be equally foreign from our purpose. When the meeting takes place, numerous devices have been proposed. "The Majesty of the People;" "The triumph of Justice over oppression;" "Morgan's Ghost walks unavenged among us;" "Masons have had their day;" "Murder will out;" "He that sheddeth Man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed;" "The voice of Abel cries to me from the ground." The leaders on the occasion will select for themselves. There is much greatness to be maintained. The sovereign people are to move in commanding attitude; a vile and contemptible society, with blood on their heads are to be met. Our citizens, we trust will act with decency.—The great solemn subject will sink deep into their hearts and evince itself in their whole deportment.

The 25th of June, a day big with expectation, at length arrived. About 300 masons assembled. A large concourse of between 2 and 3000, by some magnified into 4 or 5000, met pursuant to Col. Miller's

notice, at the court house. Some came armed with guns, and left them in the environs of the village; and some with large knives resembling the scalping knives of the American savage. The day however passed off, without any incident of consequence to mar its festivity. Some feeble attempts to insult the masonick procession, as it passed along the street, were made, but speedily repressed by the good sense of those assembled. The procession was once or twice broken by the driving of a waggon through it and back again, apparently with design. A few stones were also thrown. These measures, originating as they did with the meanest of the vulgar, met the disapprobation of all respectable men. Had the masons, smarting as they did under insults intended to provoke them to hostilities, been so unwise as not to have suppressed their resentment, the village of Batavia would unquestionably on that day have been a scene of horrour.

The proceedings at the masonick celebration were solemn and impressive: the address delivered by George Hosmer, Esq. of Livingston county, fully answered the expectations of his most partial friends. And the masons, for having endured the scoffs and sneers of an enraged multitude with so much patience, deserved, and with many obtained, considerable applause.

As the people at large were not yet prepared for deeds of violence, the managers of the excitement found it necessary to alter their course. To outlaw and proscribe the masons, had from the beginning with some, been a favourite object—and in this particular they have in part succeeded.

As a preparatory step to this measure, it was thought expedient by them to exclude all masons from sitting upon Juries. The several town meetings, in 1827, having terminated principally in their favour, an opportunity was thereby presented for carrying this favourite scheme into execution, under the semblance of legal authority.

The Statute, 1st vol. Revised Laws, page 329, sec. 13, enacts that the supervisor, town clerk, and assessors of the several towns shall annually, on or before the first day of July, cause to be made and transmitted to the clerk of the county, an alphabetical list of the names, with the place of abode and addition of all persons residing in their respective towns, and qualified and of sufficient ability and understanding to serve as jurors in the several courts, and not contained in either of the boxes kept by the said clerk for that purpose, who shall thereafter cause such names, with the places of abode and addition, to be written on separate slips of paper and put into the box out of which the names of the jurors are next to be drawn. And it is hereby made the duty of each of the town clerks in the several towns in the respective counties, to transmit to the clerk of the county annually, on or before the first day of July, another and a like list of the names of all such persons who had before been returned as able and sufficient jurors, but have since died, removed out of the county, or become otherwise disqualified, and the said clerk shall thereupon destroy the several slips of paper containing such names"

Among those returned as "able and sufficient jurors" from the town of Bethany, previous to 1827,

were a number of masons—who were freeholders—men of understanding and integrity—some of whom were members of churches, and one of them, Josiah Churchill, Esq. had for three years represented the county of Genesee in the Assembly of this state. These, by an act of the town clerk, were all disqualified, because they were masons. And their names were of course taken out of the jury box. For this the town clerk was afterwards indicted by the unanimous vote of an anti-masonick grand jury. The indictment has since been tried, and the defendant acquitted.

On the traverse of said indictment at the court of Oyer and Terminer held at Batavia in April 1829, it appeared in evidence that those returned as disqualified jurors were freeholders, and it was admitted by the defendant's counsel, that they were men of understanding, of intelligence and integrity; it was also admitted that they were returned as disqualified because they were masons. It appeared in evidence that great excitement prevailed in Bethany at that time. That the exclusion of masons from juries was frequently talked of, and generally conceded to be correct and proper. It appeared also by one witness that the town clerk was told that if he did not take care of their interests, (the anti-masons) they would take care of him. The defendant however was proved to be a man of integrity and candour, and it was abundantly shown that he acted by the advice and counsel of others, and apparently with a view conscientiously to discharge his trust. The court charged the jury, that although the defendant had grossly mistaken his duty, they did not think there was evidence

enough to show that he acted corruptly--and advised them to acquit him, which they accordingly did.

That the returning of masons as disqualified jurors was in violation not only of the letter but of the spirit of the law, cannot reasonably be questioned. In criminal cases, however, the intention constitutes the sole criterion of guilt--some palliating circumstances were proved on the part of the defendant, and it is therefore upon the whole perhaps right that he should have been acquitted; still it was equally proper that he should have been arraigned at the bar of his country for an act sanctioned neither by law nor justice, and which could not be done without trampling upon both.*

On a subsequent occasion, when masons met as usual to elect their annual officers, efforts were made to prevent them from assembling; and for that purpose an effigy was carried through the streets, and burnt opposite the lodge room in this village. This outrage originating only with a few, and those of but little consequence even among the anti-masonick party, created of course no commotion, and excited no other feelings than those of contempt.

Having succeeded in removing masons from office --having excluded them from juries, and in some instances from the church--having outlawed and proscribed some of the best and worthiest of our citizens—men who had been foremost in acts of publick

*The Court also charged the Jury (and in that particular they were unquestionably wrong) that the defendant could not be convicted on the indictment, because he acted merely as the clerk of the board of inspectors, in making the return —without adverting to the statute which makes it the sole duty of the clerk to return those "who have since died, removed out of the county, or become otherwise disqualified."

and private munificence, they resolved themselves into a court of inquisitors, and at a county convention held at Batavia in Feb. 1829, of which Stephen Griswold, Esq. of Stafford, was chairman, and H. A. Reed, of Le Roy, secretary, it was among other things in relation to the Holland Land Company,

"*Resolved*, That a committee of six be appointed by this Convention, to inquire *whether the local agent of said company is a mason, and if not, whether he is under the influence of the fraternity; whether he bestows the patronage of his office on members of the fraternity, and to sustain masonick papers*, and those who are the supporters of the institution, and the revilers of those who are engaged in opposition to it; whether the clerks employed in the Land office at this place, and in other offices on the tract, are all of them masons, if not, how many are masons; whether all or any of those who are not masons are under their influence or controul, or are supporters of the institution; whether the local agent and the clerks in the several offices have, or do undertake from the power and influence necessarily resulting from their stations, improperly to controul or influence the publick opinion, and that said committee correspond with the corresponding committee of the several counties on the said tract, in reference to the above subjects, and that, if they shall deem it expedient, to recommend a convention of delegates from the several counties on the said tract, to be held at Buffalo on the 4th day of July next, to take into consideration the subjects mentioned in this resolution. And, in case they should not deem it expedient to recommend a convention, to publish a report of the information they may acquire on the above subject, in the antimasonick newspapers."

And however strange it may appear, T. Cary Esq. of this village, the intimate personal friend of Mr. Evans, the highly esteemed and respectable agent of said Company, was placed on that committee. I ought perhaps in justice to Mr. Cary here to remark,

that he was not a member of that convention, and it is presumed disapproved of its proceedings. He has not however had the candour to avow in publick his disapprobation, and of course has lent to its projectors the sanction of his name.

The principles avowed in the above resolution, as they are without precedent, it is hoped will remain without imitation. The dark recesses of the Spanish Inquisition do not afford a parallel. Papal Rome in her most arrogant days never prescribed to her votaries, who they should and should not employ as clerks. The protestants in their zeal to persecute the catholicks never made a similar requisition; and it is hoped another instance of the like kind will never disgrace our land.

Violent and unprincipled excesses in most cases have carried their antidote with them. They may, perhaps, and from recent demonstrations of publick opinion it may fairly be inferred that they will in this.

The abuse of papal authority produced the reformation--the abuse of power by a British monarch produced the Magna Charta--and the assumptions of a British Parliament expanded the wings of our Eagle, and prepared him for his noblest flights.

CHAPTER XIX.

The case of Eli Bruce—His removal from the office of Sheriff of the County of Niagara.

Eli Bruce, whose name is familiar to every one at all conversant with the "Morgan affair," in the fall of 1825 was elected by the people of the county

of Niagara as their sheriff for three years. Being a person of great activity and vigilance in business, and possessed of fine liberal and social feelings, at the commencement of the unfortunate difficulty which afterwards occasioned his removal from office, he had become extremely popular.

The most brilliant prospects however are often obscured by clouds. Having been suspected of participation in the abduction of Morgan, and the proofs of his guilt as it was supposed being abundant, in the spring or summer of 1827 a complaint was made to his Excellency Governour Clinton, then, as already stated, Grand High Priest of the General Grand Chapter, by whom a summons was immediately issued, directing the party accused to appear before him at Albany, and shew cause why he should not be removed from office. The sheriff appeared before the Governour by counsel, but neglected or refused to give such an explanation of his conduct as was required at his hands. Governour Clinton therefore after waiting a reasonable time for that purpose, and no explanation being given, on the first of October, 1827, removed him from office. His reasons for so doing being stated at large in the proclamation issued on that occasion, I have thought proper to insert it below.

By DE WITT CLINTON, Gov. of the State of New-York.

WHEREAS Eli Bruce, sheriff of the county of Niagara, has been charged before me with a violation of his duties as a good citizen and a faithful officer, in being concerned in the abduction of William Morgan, and has been heard in his defence: And whereas, in the investigation of the said accusation, it appeared that it was completely in the power of the said Eli Bruce, if innocent, to establish his innocence: And whereas, in order to afford him that opportunity, a decision

on the complaint has been suspended for an ample time, and he has given no explanation of his conduct: And whereas it appears that at a recent trial at Canandaigua, of certain persons charged with the said abduction, the said Eli Bruce, when called on as a witness, refused to testify on several material points on the ground of self-crimination; from all of which, I am persuaded that he was participant in the said abduction, and thereby has rendered himself unworthy of the official station which he at present occupies, I do therefore, pursuant to the powers vested in me by the constitution of this state, remove the said Eli Bruce from the office of sheriff of the county of Niagara.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and the (L. S.) privy seal of the state, at the city of Albany, the 1st day of October, A. D. 1827.

DE WITT CLINTON.

CHAPTER XX.

Thomas Hamilton.

"Morgan's Illustrations of Masonry" not having been so explicit as could have been desired--and admitting of various interpretations, it soon became apparent that some explanations were necessary. A difficulty arose, however, in finding a suitable person for that purpose. While this difficulty was felt and acknowledged by all, and the presence of some one ardently desired, whose talents and knowledge of masonry were adequate to the task, a fellow by the name of Thomas Hamilton suddenly appeared.

This Hamilton was not only one of the most corrupt and depraved, but also the meanest of mankind. By pretending to a knowledge of Morgan's fate, and expressing frequent alarms for his personal safety, he

contrived to gain their confidence--and as the touch of Midas is said to have converted every thing into gold, the influence of anti-masonry at once converted this villain by nature, this drunkard by practice, and this vagrant by trade, into a saint and a patriot.

Having renounced masonry, he tendered his services in the first instance as an assistant editor to Col. Miller. That situation however being at that time occupied by Mr. Cochran, he commenced a course of lectures on Masonry, and from Batavia went to Rochester, where, on the strength of a pretended certificate from some methodist preacher in Canada, he recommended himself to the benevolent of that communion, from whom he received a supply of money sufficient to enable him to reach Utica, the ostensible goal of his utmost wishes. Having succeeded in one imposture he attempted another, and with the aid of a pretended letter recommending him as a person in distress, to another denomination of christians, he solicited charity from them. The latter scheme, however, not succeeding agreeably to his wishes, he at once cast off his pretended sanctity, and besieged the ears and pockets of the credulous with tales of Morgan's fate, and at the same time with petitions for pecuniary aid. Those who in the first instance had contributed to relieve his pretended wants, being apprized of the imposture, made complaint to a justice, by whom a warrant was issued and Hamilton thereby arrested. The proofs being abundant, he was committed by justice Wheeler for three months as a vagrant to the county jail.

At the expiration of the said three months, he returned to Batavia, and once more resumed his anti-

masonick labours. Multitudes of all ages, sexes, and conditions, flocked around him. Scarce any room was sufficient to contain them. In Stafford and in Elba his success it is said was greater still. Deacons and elders of churches united in prayers for his safety, and the name of Hamilton was echoed and re-echoed through the land.

He afterwards went to Avon, in the county of Livingston, where he lectured with similar applause.—One evening after his exercises were closed, he unfortunately (as was frequently the case) got so drunk that his life was despaired of. It was immediately reported that he had been poisoned by masons.—Newspapers devoted to the holy cause which Hamilton with so much zeal, ability, and effect, was advocating, espoused his cause, and alarmed the whole country once more with cries of murder.

This tale, tho' false and improbable, was devoured by a credulous publick, and Hamilton, whom many supposed already in his grave, was considered as a martyr to their cause.

Unfortunately, however, for the managers, Hamilton at length got sober, and soon thereafter departed for Buffalo.

Buffalo at that time had not participated so much in the excitement as some neighbouring villages.—Hamilton's success therefore in lecturing was at first problematical. Still, however, he contrived in a short period, by accident, to throw the whole village into a flame. One Norman Fay, of Batavia, was about this time drowned in the Tonnewanta creek. He was found soon afterwards by some neighbouring inhabitants, and decently interred. Hamilton had

not been long in the village before he was unexpectedly missing. Search was made for him in every corner, and he could not be found. During his mysterious absence, news of the death of a stranger by drowning, within a few miles of the village, struck their ears. It was immediately conjectured by those who were determined to have it so, that the mysterious stranger could be no other than the persecuted Hamilton. Horses and carriages were put in requisition, and a number with great pomp and parade proceeded to his grave. Witnesses to identify the body were taken along, and some who remained at home commenced the publication of a handbill to announce the glad tidings to a credulous world. The body of Fay, which those benevolent neighbours who had given it a decent burial supposed would remain undisturbed till the last trump should sound, was dragged forth from its grave, but could not, with all their prejudice and zeal, be recognized as Hamilton's; it was therefore re-interred, and the party commenced its return to Buffalo. Before its arrival, however, and before the handbill already in type had been issued from the press, Hamilton emerged from a grocery, where he had remained during all this time drunk, and dispelled the illusion.

He soon departed for Ontario county, where he was received by an anti-masonick friend with open arms, and to reward the benevolence of his host, attempted to commit a rape upon his daughter, a little girl of nine years old, for which he was arrested, committed to jail, and afterwards tried, convicted, and sentenced to hard labour in the state prison at Auburn for seven years.

Thus terminated the hopes, the expectations, and usefulness of Thomas Hamilton, a man who had been *persecuted*, *poisoned*, and *drowned*, on account of his faith and practice.

Brown who kept the tavern at Avon, where it was said attempts had been made by the masons to poison Hamilton some time before, on being accused of participation in that pretended offence by one Wait, afterwards prosecuted him in an action of slander, which was tried at the fall Circuit in Livingston County 1828, held at Geneseo, before the Hon. John Birdsall, Circuit Judge, and a Jury composed by consent of parties, wholly of anti-masons, and a verdict found in favour of the plaintiff for $270 and costs.

I ought, perhaps, in justice to a few respectable anti-masons in this vicinity to remark, that some of their number gave Hamilton no encouragement whatever; and it is much to be regretted that the same cannot with equal propriety be said of others.

Hamilton's letter published in the Republican Advocate in this village on the 30th of November 1827, being somewhat of a curious document, and an excellent counterpart to Dr. Backus' celebrated letter of the 30th of January preceding, ought to be kept in remembrance, and is therefore inserted.

Avon, Nov. 23, 1827.

Col. D. C. Miller—

Sir—It is with all possible diffidence that I take up my pen for the purpose of addressing you on the present occasion. I have been here since the day after I last saw you. I left Batavia on Saturday morning and arrived here the next day.—On Monday I delivered a course of lectures to a large assembly of persons, of both sexes, on the first seven degrees of *Masonry*, which was graciously received by *all*, except the "*Brethren*." On Tuesday evening we established a Lodge at the house of Mr. Wiard, a warm advocate against the "*mystic tie*." We have initiated, passed, and raised to the *sublime* degree of a Master Mason. This called for something to be done by the members of the self-styled "ancient and honourable" fraternity, to put a stop to what they termed a "grow-

ing evil!" On Saturday I was arrested on a warrant, and taken before Esquire Bennet, but was by him dismissed, as there was no cause of action. They, however, were unwilling to lose their victim; and consequently on Tuesday following I was again apprehended, taken before another justice of the peace, (Esquire Beecher) and again acquitted.—The same evening I had another communication of Anti-Masons, and conferred the degree of Mark-Master. On Monday last I went into a tavern kept by a mason, and had something to drink, after which I went to Mr. Keyes' with whom I board at present; but, alas! scarcely had I arrived there, before my eyes began to roll in my head, and I became perfectly senseless. Two doctors were immediately sent for; they gave me a double portion of tartar emetic, which caused a great vomiting. Dr. Ainsworth allowed that something had been given me, that *ought not to have been given.* He did not say it was poison, but intimated it as his opinion. What I have thrown off my stomach is preserved, for chemical operation. As it respects myself, I have no doubt that I was poisoned! Thus you see "in the midst of life we are in death." Since the above, there are many of the craft who have reported through the neighbourhood that I was an impostor, and knew nothing of masonry. TH. HAMILTON.

P. S.—Had the doctors been ten minutes later, my life had been gone. Such was the opinion of all.

☞The foregoing statement is certified to by the signatures of five respectable citizens of Avon.

CHAPTER XXI.

A body found on the shore of Lake Ontario, supposed for a short time to be Morgan's--First inquest thereon—Second inquest—Third inquest—Proved finally to be Timothy Monro's.

The Lewiston Committee, as already stated, during the spring of 1827, pursued their inquiries with great diligence, in the hope and expectation of finding Morgan's body, which it was supposed and believed by many had in the month of September preceding, been consigned to a watery grave. Boats were chartered, a vessel hired, and instruments constructed, for the purpose of aiding and assisting their researches. The Niagara river and a part of Lake Ontario near Fort Niagara were raked with great industry and exertions for a number of months, all however to no effect. The search was finally abandoned, and it was generally conceded that the same mystery which had hitherto hung over Morgan's fate, would forever thereafter conceal his mortal remains "in clouds and darkness."

While publick expectations were thus disappointed, the body of a stranger, on the 7th of October, 1827, was found in the town of Carlton, in the county of Orleans, about forty miles from Fort Niagara. It was lying at the water's edge, where it had been left by the surf. A coroner was sent for--an inquest was held--witnesses who were personally acquainted with Morgan were examined—and the verdict of a jury pronounced it the body of some person to them unknown, who had perished by drowning. Being at

that time in a putrid state, and very offensive, it was immediately buried.

The coroners' inquest was immediately published in a variety of newspapers, and suspicions were at once excited that the body thus found and interred was the body of Morgan.

An important election was then approaching. Unprincipled and designing men, who had witnessed the effect of popular excitement on a former occasion, saw the necessity of some powerful auxiliary, and concerted, it seems, a plan for bringing this circumstance to their aid. Suspicions that this was Morgan's body, by a little exertion, soon became prevalent throughout the country. Nor is it singular that such should have been the case. It is true that thirteen months had nearly elapsed since Morgan's abduction, and the state of preservation in which this body confessedly was, indicated death at a more recent period. The publick mind however was not in a fit condition to judge impartially. Reason had lost her empire, and prejudice and passion had usurped her place. The slightest evidence, though contradicted by unequivocal proofs, though opposed, as in this case, even by nature's law, and improbable in itself, became equivalent to perfect demonstration.

In this state of the publick mind, several gentlemen from Batavia and Rochester, some of them with the purest of motives, and some of them it is to be feared with motives not so pure, on Saturday, the 13th of October, 1827, repaired to the grave. They disinterred and examined the body, and discovered, or pretended that they discovered, and in that particular some of them may perhaps have been sincere, a

partial resemblance between the body in question and that of Morgan. They caused it to be watched and guarded with the utmost care till the Monday following, to prevent, as was said, the masons from taking it away.

During the interval which elapsed between Saturday and Monday, a variety of expedients were resorted to for effect. Mrs. Morgan, then residing in Stafford, was visited by a member of the Lewiston Committee. Her feelings harrowed up by frequent and contradictory reports, gave easy entrance to a tale which bore on its face the appearance of plausibility, and which she probably thought might in the end lead to certainty, and give to her agitated mind some little repose. Without reflecting for a moment that she was to be made an instrument in the hands of designing men to promote their selfish views, and then to "be cast like a loathsome weed away," she placed herself under their protection and accompanied them to Carlton. Her anxiety on this occasion was perfectly natural, and it was therefore right and proper that she should have been satisfied by occular inspection of the truth or falsehood of the current rumour.

On arriving at Carlton on the 15th of October, the body was slightly and imperfectly examined. It was bloated and entirely black, putrid on its surface, and offensive (beyond any thing conceivable) to sight or smell. Its dress did not correspond with any thing which they had seen before, and the religious tracts in the pocket staggered some of the most credulous. There was not in fact a single circumstance, either in the dress, size, shape, colour, or appearance of the body, which pointed it out as Morgan's.

Still, the managers of the excitement having watched with the eyes of an argus the current of publick opinion, and seeing it begin to run decidedly in their favour, and being unwilling that so useful a delusion should immediately be dispelled, contrived, as it will appear in the sequel, to give this, one of the most infamous frauds ever imposed on man, the sanction of legal authority.

Had the inquiry on the 15th of October been conducted with fairness and candour—had truth been their object—had the two Potters who found the body, who were acquainted with Morgan, and had been examined on the first inquest, been sworn also on this—had Hinman Holden of Batavia, a member of the Lewiston Committee, and a gentleman of too much respectability to tamper with his oath for political effect, who had seen and examined the body on the 13th of October, before it was prepared for inspection by the deprivation of its hair and whiskers, had he been present and been sworn—had Col. Miller, who was in habits of daily intercourse with Morgan, given his opinion on oath—had Thurlow Weed and Timothy Fitch been called on for theirs—had the body been examined in regard to its size and length—had as much pains been taken to elicit as to conceal the truth, the body in question would never have been palmed as Morgan's upon a credulous world.

The jury however were not apprised of these mighty preparations, and in the absence of all testimony calculated to throw any light whatever upon the subject, save the insulated opinions of Mrs. Morgan*

*Mrs. Morgan's opinion, it will be found, is not supported by any one circumstance she related.

and two or three others, as a matter of course found a verdict as they did.

The testimony taken on that occasion, which will be found below, having excited in this community much interest at the time, deserves an attentive perusal.

Information of witnesses, severally taken and acknowledged, on behalf of the people of the state of New-York, and touching the death of an unknown person found in the town of Carlton, in the county of Orleans, on the shore of Lake Ontario, on the 15th day of October, in the year of our Lord 1827, before Robert M. Brown, Esq. one of the Coroners of said county, on an inquisition then and there taken on view of the said unknown person then and there being dead—as follows—

Stillman Hoxsie, Being sworn—found the body, lying on the face with his head towards the shore, a week ago yesterday, between 11 and 12 o'clock—gave information to the Coroner before moving the body. Had on a frock coat, black, black vest and pantaloons, woollen socks and shirt, handkerchief cotton, or might be silk—did not know how long he had lain there—body is more swollen now and blacker than when found, particularly in the face and head.

STILLMAN HOXSIE.

Lester Beardsley, being sworn—has viewed the head of the body, which has the appearance of William Morgan; the shape of the head is the same and the hair is the same; knew Morgan, and saw him in August before he was missing; the ears and the appearance about the ears is the same. Morgan showed him his teeth—had what is called double teeth all round his jaws, and the body has the same. No teeth were gone four years since when he shewed them to me. Morgan's ears were filled with hair more than people in general, which was long and white, beard was grey, wore no whiskers: His hair was long and combed up to cover his baldness; had a small nose, more hair on his chest than people in general, full chest, light blue eyes, lightish complexion, his height was similar to that of the body—should

think him over fifty years of age. Thinks that this is the body of William Morgan. LESTER BEARDSLEY.

Thurlow Weed, sworn, saith that on the 15th inst. he came in company with other gentlemen from Rochester, to view this body—that in consequence of its being stated by one of the persons, who was well acquainted with Morgan, that his ears were full of long white hairs, witness examined the ears of said body carefully, when he found several hairs long and white, which came out upon touching them, and that he found a large number of said hairs deposited in a mess in the bottom of the ear. These hairs corresponded with those represented by Mr. Fitch *before* the body was disenterred. Witness does not recollect any thing of Mr Morgan, although he must have seen him often.

T. WEED.

Lucinda Morgan, being sworn, says—I am the wife of William Morgan, of Batavia. I saw him the last time, the 11th of September, 1826. He had on a blue coat, vest and pantaloons—pantaloons of different kind of cloth from the vest and coat. Should know the clothes if I saw them. He had no flannel shirt, but was in the habit of wearing a flannel wrapper. He had on boots and woollen socks; boots old and worn, thinks they were calf-skin. Had on a white neck handkerchief, and linen shirt. Had a silk pocket handkerchief, something worn. Used tobacco. Has seen the body; finds points of resemblance between the body and her husband. His teeth, his hands, his hair, breast, his nails on fingers and toes, similar to those of the body. He was inoculated for the small pox on the left arm. Had double teeth all round. Two teeth were gone and one was split off. Dr. Strong drew two teeth for him. His suspenders were cotton and knit. Coat pockets were lined with white, vest lined with the same cloth as coat—lining of pantaloons was white, thinks linen. Morgan was bald on the top of his head, except a small place in the centre of his head, where there was fine hair like down. Dressed his hair latterly by combing it down. The teeth were gone on the right side of the upper jaw. I have no doubt but this is the body of my husband. On the joint of the big toe on the left foot he had

been frozen, and the physician cut open the flesh and scraped the bone which left the same appearance which is now upon the body. He had a good deal of hair on his chest, which was grey, and he was full breasted. Never had a broken bone to my knowledge. On being shown the dress, I can recognise no part of it as the same which my husband had on when he went away, nor the tracts. The hand-writing I cannot swear to, though one or two letters somewhat resemble his. I am fully convinced in my own mind, that this is the body of Wm. Morgan. L. MORGAN.

D. C. Miller, being sworn, says that he knew William Morgan and has partly examined the body. Did not know that Morgan had double teeth, or that he had lost two teeth. His dress when he went away, was a blue frock coat, blue vest and pantaloons. My impression is that he was bald on the top of his head wholly. Thinks he had no boots, was 50 years of age or over, had a habit of drawing his hair over his head with his hands when in conversation.

D. C. MILLER.

George W. Harris, being duly sworn, says that he knew William Morgan and has seen the body. Morgan shaved at my glass and shaved higher than any man I ever saw.—The body has been shaved up to the eyes—does not know particularly about his hair. Saw him the day he was taken away, and knew him more than one year previous. His dress was a blue frock coat, blue vest and pantaloons, old boots—he never wore a flannel shirt as I can say, might have worn a flannel wrapper: the size and shape of Morgan's fingers and finger nails were same as the body's; Morgan had a double chin, and thinks the body has a double chin.—He had a fine set of teeth, and had lost some which he showed when he grated his teeth or laughed. He had an extreme full chest; his bosom was quite hairy and gray; the colour of the hair is the same as that on the body. Morgan had a lump towards the top of his head, which I think I observed on the body; he was not far from 50 years of age; I think about five feet eight inches high; don't know of his having small or kine pox, he had a tapering arm, and had a small wrist; fully satisfied that this is the body of William Mor-

gan. He had a short nose, was a brick layer; lived over my shop; was agitated for some time when talking before he was taken away. GEO. W. HARRIS.

Wm. W. Morgan, being sworn says, that he was acquainted with Wm. Morgan—his head, his beard, the hair upon his breast resembles this body—and the make of his features are similar. Does not recollect any thing about his teeth; was acquainted with him two years ago last February, and from that time since until he was missing. I was absent about nine months from Batavia, but saw him frequently.

Wm. W. MORGAN.

Russel Dyer, being sworn, says he knew William Morgan and has seen this body; thinks it the body of Wm. Morgan; the shape of the head; the hair, are similar, he had double teeth; one tooth broken or split, and one gone in the upper jaw; mentioned when he first heard the Coroner's Report, if the teeth were gone in the lower jaw, it could not be Morgan; thinks he saw Morgan a year ago last August; he boarded with him; does not know that he had the small or kine pox; he had no scar about his body as he recollected; when I first saw the body, found hair in his ears; long hair and white, which fell out. He was fifty-one years of age as he informed me about three years ago—I have no doubt but this is the body of Wm. Morgan; he had hair about the breast, and a gray beard. R. DYER.

Dr. Ezra Strong, being sworn says, that he knew William Morgan four years ago, from April to Sept. in the next year; Morgan and his wife boarded at my house about six months; he was sick much of the time with sore eyes; I attended him two or three months, sometimes with other physicians; I think from the appearance of the upper part of the head of this body, it is the body of William Morgan. I extracted two teeth for him, which I found charged in my book against him; don't recollect from which side they were taken; Mrs. Morgan handed me the two teeth taken out, and they will about fill up the vacancy,* though the face is so much swollen I

* It is I believe a well known fact, that a tooth extracted cannot, particularly after the lapse of some time, be replaced;

cannot exactly determine as to their fitness; he had a heavy beard, and much hair on the breast; the body is innoculated as seems by a scar on the arm; one other tooth was broken off: If a body had been floating about since Morgan was missing, it would putrify more than this, but if had been under water, it might have been better preserved.

E. STRONG.

Dr. John D. Henry, being sworn, says he knew William Morgan when he resided in Rochester; I attended him as a physician; I do not recollect any strong mark which would distinguish him as this body; he had inflamed eyes, and I prescribed for him nearly nine months; I knew his hair but cannot identify him by that to my own satisfaction—I remembered his whiskers, and shaved them frequently—he had fine teeth in front; the teeth of the body appear as I should suppose the teeth of Morgan would appear; the shape of his head, though bloated much, is much the same as Morgan's; I should be unwilliug to say it was Morgan's, or it was not, though his teeth, the shape of his head, and his hair resemble Morgans. J. D. HENRY.

All the above informations were severally taken and acknowldged, the fifteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-seven, in the town of Carlton, County and State aforesaid.

ROBERT M. BROWN, *Cor.*

Orleans County *ss.*—An inquisition indented and taken for the people of the State of New-York, at the town of Carlton in the county of Orleans aforesaid, in the open air, on the shore of Lake Ontario in said county and town, the 15th day of October in the year of our lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-seven, before me Robert M. Brown, Gentleman, one of the Coroners of the said state for the county aforesaid; upon the view of the body of William Morgan, then and there lying dead upon the earth, of John Archer,

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it will more than fill up the vacancy. Of course Dr. Strong's testimony in the above particular, establishes, so far as it establishes any thing, a fact diametrically opposed to the one which many attempt to draw from the above circumstance.

Silas Joy, Suell Joy, W. Williams, Matthew Dunham, John Barnum, R. Wilcox, Rodney Parish, John H. Tyler, Asa Simpson, Asa Kimball, I. Hall, Stephen Jennings, Richard Barry, Ebenezer Handy, Abel Barnum, John Murdock, Samuel Baldwin, Asahel Byington, Reuben Scofield, Jesse Hall, James Tafft, and Lyman G. Hoxsie; good and lawful men of the said county, who being sworn and charged to enquire on the part of the people of the state of New-York, aforesaid, when, where, how, and after what manner, the said William Morgan came to his death; do say, upon their oaths aforesaid, that the said Wm. Morgan, came to his death by suffocation by drowning, and so the said jurors aforesaid do say, he, the said Wm. Morgan came to his death—In witness whereof, as well the said Coroner, as the jurors aforesaid, have to their inquisition set their hands and seals the day and year aforesaid, at the place aforesaid.

SAMUEL BALDWIN, *Foreman.*

Asahel Byington, John H. Tyler, L. G. Hoxsie, Asa Simpson, John Barnum, Abel S. Barnum, James Tafft, A. Kimball, Matthew Dunham, Stephen Jennings, S. Joy, Silas Joy, John Archer, Richard Barry, Rodney Parish, Jesse Hall, John Murdock, Reuben Scofield, Wm. Williams, E. Handy, R. Wilcox, and I. Hall.

ROBERT M. BROWN, *Coroner.*

When the above testimony is contrasted with that taken on the third inquest, the fallacy of the above cannot but strike even the most casual observer.

Notwithstanding, however, its absurdity, it was generally believed, and the body (its identity being as it was supposed, now established by legal proof) was afterwards removed with great parade to the village of Batavia, and there interred in the presence of a multitude who had flocked thither to witness the solemn scene. A funeral discourse was afterwards delivered by one James Cochran, now residing in New-York, who at that time, when sober, and sometimes

when otherwies, occasionally preached in this vicinity, and was then assistant editor to Col. Miller.

When the remains of Joseph Ellicott, agent of the Holland Land Company, were removed from the city of New-York to this village, no gaping crowd followed his hearse; no learned divine pronounced his requiem. They were deposited without parade by a few surviving friends in the house prepared for all living, and no evidence of self-congratulation escaped their lips while returning to their homes. Not so in the present instance. "Glad tidings of great joy" were diffused throughout the land. Morgan is found, was at once the theme of every tongue. Providence, it was said, had interposed its aid, and Heaven laid bare its outstretched arm to avenge his death not upon the guilty perpetrators only, but upon the whole fraternity. The already excited bosom received new impulse, and future triumphs were rung in every ear. The cry of vengeance was wafted on every breeze, and mingled with every echo returning from the lake where Morgan's ghost, it was said, "performed its nightly rounds."

A voice, however, from Canada, soon afterwards dispelled the general joy. It was at first a still small voice. The voice of an afflicted widow and her fatherless children interposing their claim to the last relicks of a deceased husband and father. Their pretensions for a while were treated with levity, and their persons, by some, were insulted and abused.—Prejudice and passion, however, soon retired at the approach of truth. Conclusive evidence established the justice of their claims, and an insulted community ratified the verdict.

A notice first appeared in the Canada newspapers, that one Timothy Monro, of the township of Clark, in the district of Newcastle, in Upper Canada, left that place in September, 1827, for Newark, in a small boat, and was drowned in the Niagara river, while attempting to return. A partial description of the body found in Carlton, together with the clothes and religious tracts found in the pocket of the deceased, having been published in the newspapers in this vicinity, soon after the first inquest, and coming to the knowledge of Monro's surviving friends, induced a belief that the body found in Carlton could be no other than his. Mrs. Sarah Monro therefore, widow of the deceased, accompanied by her son, and one John Cron, her friend, immediately after the receipt of this intelligence, repaired to the county of Orleans, in order to examine it and to satisfy herself of its identity.

On their arrival at Gaines, and before the clothes had been exhibited for her inspection, she was called upon by Bates Cook, Esq. and other members of the Lewiston Committee, to describe them. She did so, and in a manner which carried conviction with it. Some of them had been made in a manner rather unusual. Some of them had been mended—and the stockings had been darned—all of which she minutely described. Some particular marks had escaped the Committee's scrutinizing eyes; these she mentioned, and among other things that a piece had been sewed on at the bottom of one side of one leg of the pantaloons, which gave it the appearance of a wide hem: she described the lining, the pockets, and even the minutest marks. The clothes on their subse-

quent production, (they having during all the time which had elapsed since their discovery been in the possession of the Committee) exhibited all the marks so particularly described by her, and which could only have been known to the person who had made or mended, or closely examined them. Her statement was confirmed by Daniel Monro, her son, who in addition thereto stated that he purchased the cloth for the pantaloons, and that the pattern was rather scanty, which accounted for the pantaloons being thus spliced. John Cron also testified that he saw Monro on the day that he was drowned, in clothes similar to those described, and that he saw him have religious tracts, which he at the time put into his pocket. Under any other circumstances, the above facts would have silenced incredulity itself. It was thought proper, however, that other proof should be adduced in order to place the matter not only beyond the reach of controversy, but expose the former deception.

For that purpose a Coroner's inquest was called, and a jury were impannelled at Batavia, on the 29th of October, 1827. The body buried as Morgan's was disinterred, and the evidence detailed below submitted to their consideration. They decided upon oath that it was the body of Timothy Monro, who had been accidentally drowned in Lake Ontario on the 26th of September then preceding.

Hinman Holden of Batavia, a witness on this occasion, is a gentleman of high respectability. He was at the time, and still is, a member of the Morgan Committee. He saw the body before the second inquest, and ever afterwards expressed his opinion

"without fear, favour, affection, or hope of reward," that it was not the body of Morgan. It will be observed by referring to his testimony, that he speaks particularly and with confidence of the hair on the head and the whiskers. Six other witnesses, four of whom are not masons, testify to the same fact.—The Coroner himself was not a mason, and but three out of twenty-four of the jurors. Some dissented, it appears, from the verdict, by voting in blank, not because they believed the body was Morgan's, but because they had doubts in relation to its being Monro's. The inquest, however, it will be observed, was taken at a time "when reason could no more be heard than a whisper amidst the most violent hurricane." It was taken too at a place where prejudice had formed a channel in the publick mind; and where, too, opinions formed without proof had been confidently expressed, even by some of the jurors.

The conduct of "the managers" in relation to the body of Monro, evinces more depravity than any transaction connected with the excitement; and has left a stain upon their characters, difficult if not impossible to efface. It is not intended, however, by this to criminate all the Morgan Committee. There are some honourable exceptions among them, and it is to be regretted that there are not more.

Aregard for justice requires on this occasion some further remarks in relation to the second inquest. It is, or rather would be, at any other time, singular that persons employed by their fellow citizens to investigate the truth, whose end was justice, should have withheld from the second jury, the testimony which would at once have dispelled the illusion,

and all, too, for the purpose, as one of their number triumphantly remarked, of making this "a good Morgan enough till after election." It is also equally singular that men pretending to respectability should not, if they were themselves at first deceived, in case they were honest, when they afterwards became satisfied of their errour, have atoned for their conduct by some publick declaration. Instead, however, of doing this act of justice to those whom they had insulted and abused, they persisted still in the repetition of their wrongs, and some portion of community it is said even at this day insist (on the authority of Col. Miller) that the body of Monro, which reposes in the Batavia church-yard, is the body of William Morgan.

A more gross and infamous deception was never practised upon the world. Nothing short of the most childish credulity on the one part, and the most abandoned profligacy on the other, would have induced "the managers" to hazard so bold an experiment: and nothing short of the servile homage to those managers which the prostrate Hindoo pays to his God, could have insured its success.

Time, however, which unfolds the secret works of darkness, will finally dispel the illusion, and a returning sense of right and wrong repair at last the ravages it has made.

Mrs. Monro's affidavit, made and subscribed after her examination by Bates Cook, Esq. and the box with the clothing brought forward.

Orleans County, ss.—Sarah Monro, of the township of Clark, district of Newcastle, Upper Canada, aged 44 years, being duly sworn, deposeth and sayeth, that she is the wid-

ow of Timothy Monro, late of the same place, now deceased, that she was married to said Monro 24 years since—that about six weeks since her husband, the said Timothy Monro, left home for Newark, and has never returned, and that she has understood and been informed that he was drowned in the Niagara river, in the latter part of September last past; and this deponent further saith that the clothes now produced by Bates Cook, Esq. and which are said to have been found on the body at the mouth of the Oak-Orchard creek are the clothes which her late husband wore when he last left home—that he carried no change of clothes away from home with him. This deponent further saith that she cut and made the pantaloons and vest, and that the surtout coat was cut and made by Mrs. Perkins, a neighbour of hers—that she cut and made the shirt, and that she knows those now produced are the same worn by her said husband. And the deponent further saith, that the stockings, now produced by said Bates Cook, Esq. were purchased by her husband when he was absent from home, but that she has mended the same, and knows them to be the same which her said husband wore when he last left home—that she had mended the surtout coat and pantaloons, and can identify them by the places and manner of their being mended. And the deponent further saith, that no person has ever given her any description of the clothing which was found upon the dead body at the mouth of Oak Orchard Creek, and that the particular description given by her before seeing the clothes, was given from her recollection and knowledge of them, derived in consequence of having made and repeatedly mended and seen them.

Daniel Monro, a son of the deceased, swore that the above clothes are the same which his father wore when he left home in September last—and stated facts connected with the purchase and making of them.—John Cron swore that he saw Monro the day he was drowned, and that he had on clothes similar to those now produced—that he saw Monro have some tracts or pamphlets, which he put in his pocket at the same time.

Hinman Holden, (a member of the Morgan committee, of Batavia) sworn—said that he with Timothy Fitch Esq. first saw the body at the mouth of Oak Orchard Creek, on the 13th of October inst. It was disinterred. Witness examined the body particularly, but could not discern any natural features. The head was bald on the crown, and a bald streak ran down each side to the forehead. On the top of the head there was a tuft of hair which he supposed grew there. The body had one whisker on, and it was apparent the other was either slipped or pulled off. The whisker was quite grey.—Thought the whiskers had been sandy. The hair on the head was considerably greyish. A lock of hair was brought to Batavia. Timothy Fitch was present, and we thought the hair too dark for Morgan's; but upon Mrs. Morgan's stating how it was, we thought it might be Morgan's. Mrs. Morgan was much affected at the sight of the hair, and thought it was her husband's. There certainly was a tuft of hair between the bald spot on the crown of the head and the forehead on the body which we examined on the 13th. Miller and others at Batavia informed me that Morgan was wholly bald on the top of his head. I saw particularly a bald spot on each side of the head. I charged the persons who went down the second time, to see if the hair was turned up. At the time I supposed the hair grew on the head, and still suppose so. On the examination I at first thought it was Morgan, but afterwards thought it was not. On hearing a description of Morgan's head, I was more strongly impressed with the belief that it was not Morgan. I could see nothing but the colour of the hair and the shape of the forehead which induced me to believe that it was Morgan, and if it had not been suggested to be Morgan's, I did not know enough about him to have said or thought it was his body.

Dr. H. Vinton sworn—said that he saw the body at the mouth of the Oak Orchard Creek, when the second inquest was held. The head was bald on the top, but had a very considerable quantity of hair between the bald spot and the forehead. The head was not entirely bald on the sides.—I started the hair from the forehead, and knew that it grew

there. It was not merely scattering hair on the top of the head; there was quite a handful. The hair of the tuft was quite long. Knows that the hair grew on the top of the head. Cannot be mistaken about it. After starting the hair I put it back.

Dr. Hall sworn—saw the body before it was buried the first time. The hair covered the forehead and continued back. There was a bald place on the crown, and a bald place on each side as far back as the middle of the ears—hair on top of the head as thick as witness'—witness took hold of it—there was a dispute about its being Morgan, and I examined it particularly—the hair grew there, and would require pulling to get it out. I was on the first jury. Some said he (Morgan) turned the hair from the back part of his head over the baldness on top; we therefore examined the hair on the top of this body's head, to see if it grew there, or was merely turned over—we found that it grew there.—No one of the jurymen examined his eyes—the body had a good set of teeth, and some whiskers—had lost two teeth, and had one broken. When the body was taken up the second time, the hair from the top of the head was gone—could see where it was. I saw it, and Dr. Strong saw it. I shewed it to him, and he saw it—but he did not admit it, only by general consent. When I was showing it to him, a man came up, and said Morgan had hair on top of his head. We thought at first we could see a scar on the forehead; but concluded that the mark was occasioned by lying on cobble stones. We saw no mark on the arms, which were of a chocolate color—we could probably have seen the marks of India ink or gunpowder, if such marks were on them.

Moses Wood, *Daniel English*, and the two *Potters*, (who first found the body,) corroborated the above testimony of Holden, Vinton, and Hall.

The body interred was measured by the coroner, and was found to be five feet nine and a half inches; and Dr. Van Tuyl, (one of the jurymen) swore that in in his belief, if the body had been properly extended, it would have measured an inch more.

Mr. *Parmelee* and Dr. *Webster* (members of the jury) concurred with Dr. Van Tuyl, in the above testimony.

Elisha Parmelee (a juror) sworn--saw the measurement with the two foot rule, and thinks it accurate--should think the body, if straightened out, would measure 5 feet 10 1-2 or 11 inches; knew the body was some bent when the coroner measured.

Dr. Webster (a juror) saw the measurement by Mr. Waldo, with the long stick, which he thought was not put low enough to the bottom of the foot by half an inch; but supposed it immaterial, supposing that the jury were to rely on the two foot measurement of the coroner--saw and remarked that the measure was not down far enough.

C. L. Swart (a juror) sworn; saw the measurement taken with a two foot rule by the coroner; the body was three lengths of the measure, wanting 2 1-2 or 3 inches--nearly 3 inches; witness has measured the stick used with a rule.

Thomas M'Cully swore that he was well acquainted with Morgan; that he was so near his height that he was frequently taken for him, when his back was turned. He measured himself 5 feet 6 inches, and weighed from 133 to 137. Daniel H. Chandler, Ethan B. Allen, and Russel Dyer, men well acquainted with Morgan, agreed with Mr. M'Cully as to the height of Morgan.

Daniel H. Chandler, Ethan B. Allen, Thomas M'Cully, John Robinson, and Russel Dyer, proved that Morgan was wholly bald on the top of the head, and never wore whiskers.

Five teeth were extracted from the body buried, and none of the front teeth were double; sworn to by Drs. Strong and Cotes.

Dr. John Cotes, jr. of Batavia, sworn--has examined the body; has cut open the feet, and can find no mark of the bone of any of the toes having been scraped; thinks a toe bone could not have been scraped so, (as Morgan's is alleged to have been) without the skin afterwards growing to the bone; discovers no evidence of the toe bone having been scraped; witness has cut the flesh, and discovers nothing to indicate

any thing more than the first stage of decomposition; should suppose from appearance that the body has been dead about six weeks—say two months at farthest; the part under the skin has not undergone decomposition; there was no cleaving of flesh from the bones or tendons; the flesh adheres firmly to the bone; the stomach is in a perfect state, and he thinks it has nearly the same tenacity as that of a person recently dead; thinks a body could not remain in this state a year without some artificial process to preserve it; witness knew from information how this body was found on the beach, and the particulars of its treatment since, and does not think it in a more forward state of decomposition than a body would be in six or eight weeks after death; has never seen a body which had been kept in water for a year; has seen a body kept sometime in spirits; witness has dissected the feet of this body, and thinks they appear like those of a body lately dead; there is something of a protuberance at the junction of the great toe with one of the feet, which appears as if it might have been caused by a tight boot: if the wound was made within two or three years, I should suppose, if the tendons were injured, I should have noticed it; but a wound might have been made through the skin and flesh without injuring the tendons. I should not think a body would be preserved 9 or 12 months in this state,—though much would depend on the manner of keeping it. I think the body, if floating and exposed, has not been more than six weeks or two months dead; after being under water a year, it would not be in so perfect a state; a body exposed would decay much sooner after being kept so long, than if just dead. When a tooth is extracted, it will not usually go in again after a short time. I should not think this body more decayed than a body drowned on the 29th of September, and exposed as this has been since the 6th of October. (The teeth drawn from the body being produced, witness says they are not double teeth: and on examining the mark on the paper in which the teeth were wrapped, says it is the mark of blood not decomposed.) Witness has seen front double teeth, but these now produced are not what are called "front double teeth," and can see no uncommon appearance in the

teeth—nothing different from the teeth of persons fifty years of age, who have good teeth, which set together square.

The verdict of the jury was, that the body is that of TIMOTHY MONRO, who was drowned in the Niagara river on the 26th of September, 1827.

Genesee County, ss.—An Inquisition indented and taken for the body of the people of the state of New-York, at Batavia, in the county aforesaid, the 29th day of October, in the year 1827, before Jonathan Hurlburt, one of the coroners of the state for the county aforesaid, upon the view of the body of Timothy Monro, then and there lying dead, upon the oaths of Guy Carleton Towner, Osborn Filer, Alva Smith, Heman Pomeroy, jr. Joseph Fursman, Charles C. Church, Truman Hurlbut, Hall S. Gregory, Cornelius L. Swart, Daniel P. Adams, William H. Webster, Abraham Van Tuyl, John Thorp jr., Wm. Blossom, Elisha Parmelee, Wm. H. Wells, Burnham Gilbert, John Waldo, Benjamin Henshaw, Ebenezer Pomeroy, Lemont Holden, Ezekiel Betts, Oswald Williams, and Nicholas Sagendorph, good and lawful men of the said county, who being sworn and charged to inquire on the part of the people of said state, when, where, how, and after what manner, the said Timothy Monro came to his death, do say upon their oaths as aforesaid, that the said Timothy Monro came to his death by drowning, to wit: that in crossing the Niagara river from Fort Niagara to Fort George, in a skiff, the same upset in the said river, by means whereof the said Timothy Monro became accidentally drowned, to wit, on the 26th day of September, 1827.

In witness whereof, as well the said coroner as the Jurors whose names are underwritten, have to this inquisition set their hands and seals, the day and year aforesaid, and at the place aforesaid.

A. Van Tuyl, O. Filer, C. Towner, W. H. Webster, N. Sagendorph, H. S. Gregory, Chas. C. Church, D. P. Adams, B. Henshaw, John Thorp, jr. Ezekiel Betts, Truman Hurlburt, Elisha Parmele.

JONATHAN HURLBURT, *Coroner.*

All of the dissenters expressed themselves fully that the body was not Morgan's, except two—one of whom declared on the jury, that he would not believe but that was the body of Morgan, if twenty of the most respectable men in Genesee county should swear it was not.

CHAPTER XXII.

R. H. Hill—His confession--Imprisonment and discharge.

The body found in Carlton, so long as it was supposed to be Morgan's, changed the inquiry from "where is Morgan?" to "who are his murderers?"—This last inquiry for a few days produced an intense interest. Arrangements were about being made to procure indictments for murder against a number of suspected individuals, and no doubts were generally entertained but that a large number of masons, at least 60 or 70, would shortly be hanged. Some portion of community were already feasting their eyes in anticipation of such an event with their dying agonies, and listening apparently with rapture to their expiring groans.

During this period a person by the name of Hill, then residing in the town of Alden, in the county of Erie, avowed himself as one of the murderers. Hill was a carpenter by trade; but whether he was ever initiated as a mason or not, I have no means at present of ascertaining. He was represented to be a person of an orderly and quiet life, and until he con-

fessed his participation in Morgan's death, never by his conversation or conduct, gave any indications of insanity. Having made some confessions apparently by accident, to those with whom he associated, he was arrested on suspicion, and having repeated them on his examination before the justice, was committed to the Buffalo jail. While in jail he made and signed the following.

To the Citizens of Erie County:—I, R. H. Hill, of said county, did, on Tuesday last, of my own free and voluntary will, come forward and confess the crime of murdering a man, that I supposed by information was William Morgan. On examination I plead guilty. I was examined before Esq. Case and Bivins, and by them taken to this place on Monday following, and a cross-examination took place, and I was committed to the gaol of said county for farther examination. Several gentlemen have called and questioned me, and it was not my wish or intention to criminate any one but myself. For that reason I have answered the questions, some correctly, and some I have not. You dispute the truth of my assertions in respect to the horrid deed I have committed. I wish to be punished by the laws of God and my country which I have broken, and atone for the crime I have done. I am not alone in the horrid transaction. The stings of a guilty conscience, and a hand stained with the innocent blood of one that I saw only once, has stared me in the face continually. My confederates and I did take the most solemn oaths that we would not betray each other, and, in case one of us should be arrested, suffer the penalty of the law in silence. Such is my situation, and for pity's sake spare me the thoughts of breaking the oaths at present. I wish not to be examined any more, until it is at a higher court, where I shall plead guilty, and shall expect to die the ignominious death of the gallows for my bloody deeds, and may the Lord have mercy on my soul. Such will be my dying words—farewell. The prospect that is before me is dark and gloomy, when I consider how short is the time before I shall be sum-

moned to the tribunal of a just and angry God. Pity the unhappy and miserable R. H. Hill, who begs your forgiveness in the arms of death. Take warning in me, and shun the paths of vice and sorrow, and remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth. I should suppose that whoever came as I have done, and confessed the crime of murder, would need no more evidence than his own confession. But I have come to satisfy that law which I have broken. When I left York, [Livingston county] I was accompanied all the first travelling through a country unknown to me, and in the night, and not making any inquiries, stopping once and a while, and not leaving the carriage—during the night taking in sometimes a person whom I knew not, and others getting out, I could not give a correct account of the country. In my cross-examinations, I have endeavoured not to give correct answers, so as not to betray others who were my associates. When I have had my trial, I will then declare, as I should think it my duty. But at the present I wish to remain as I am. The gentleman who has called and questioned me will judge of this, and think what can be my object but to satisfy the law and the gospel. As to any thing more, I wish to have it postponed until I have my trial in the county to which it belongs. To the civil officers of Erie County.

R. H. HILL.

Buffalo, Oct. 17, 1827.

Hill shortly thereafter was removed to Lockport, in the County of Niagara, that being the county where the alleged murder is supposed to have been committed, and the only one in which he could have been tried. At the first court held in that county after Hill was committed, the case was presented to the Grand Jury for their consideration. Hill was desired by Judge Birdsall to go before the Grand Jury and state how far, and in what manner, he had been accessary to the murder of Morgan. This he declined doing, but repeated his confessions and acknowledged his guilt. No circumstances however

were shown to confirm his statement, nor was it pretended that any such existed. The Grand Jury, supposing him insane, and unwilling to predicate an indictment for murder upon his insulated confession, without a particle of other proof, and without a solitary circumstance being shown in confirmation of its truth, rejected the bill, and Hill of course was discharged.

It has been alleged, inasmuch as Bruce had before this time been removed from the office of Sheriff, and an anti-mason elected as his successor, and inasmuch also as the jury were, it is believed, composed wholly of anti-masons, that they refused to find an indictment against Hill because they were intent on nobler game; that it would reflect on the sagacity of the Morgan Committee, who had announced others as the murderers.

This allegation however is not sustained by proof. It must therefore be conceded that the Grand Jury acted with the most perfect purity of intention, and that they were governed by a thorough conviction of Hill's insanity, derived wholly from the fact that he had acknowledged his guilt, which it was supposed and believed by them would not have been the case had he really been guilty.

No explanation has since been given of Hill's extraordinary conduct, nor is it known that any such remains to be given. It is therefore at present inexplicable.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Proceedings in the Legislature of New-York in relation to the Morgan affair, during the winter of 1828.

On the 18th of March, 1828, Lieut. Governour Pitcher transmitted to the Senate of this state the following Message:

TO THE SENATE.

Gentlemen:—Among the duties devolved by the constitution upon the person administering the government, that of "taking care that the laws are faithfully executed," is, perhaps, the most important. A large portion of the inhabitants of the state has been, for more than a year, highly excited by the alleged forcible and clandenstine removal of a citizen, and the uncertainty of his fate. It is believed by many that he has been murdered, and it is certain that, if alive, he is held in captivity. This outrage upon our laws has justly alarmed our fellow citizens in that part of the state, and has produced exertions such as might have been expected from freemen conscious of their rights, and determined to maintain them, to develope the mysterious transaction, and to bring the offenders to justice. As yet their efforts have failed.—The rewards and inducements which have heretofore been proffered for a discovery, have been unavailing. The trials and convictions that have taken place, have rather increased the mystery of the transaction. The efforts of individual citizens, stimulated by a patriotic zeal, have not always been guided by discretion, and there is reason to fear that they have sometimes tended rather to prevent than promote a judicial developement of the truth. It is publickly stated, that a witness while on his way to attend the trial of some of the persons charged with a participation in the original outrage, has suddenly and unaccountably disappeared, and advertisements offering rewards for his discovery have been extensively circulated. If there be any foundation for this suggestion, it affords a strong reason for the adoption of proper measures to quiet the alarms of our fellow citizens. Under

these circumstances, it has appeared to me important that such constitutional powers as may be within the power of the Legislature, should be adopted, in order to facilitate the discovery and punishment of the offenders. It is equally due to the violated majesty of the laws, to the apprehensions of our fellow citizens, which never can or ought to be satisfied until justice is obtained, and to those who have been or may be included in the general and vague suspicions which are always produced by such transactions. It is an imperative duty to the innocent, that those really guilty should be detected and punished.

Without intending to encroach upon the particular duties of the Legislature, I respectfully recommend, in accordance with these views, that a law be passed, authorizing the appointment of a competent person for the special purpose of investigating the alleged criminal transactions in relation to the removal of William Morgan, and all the incidents connected therewith; that the powers of district attorney be also vested in him; that it be made his duty to repair to the places where the offences were committed; to examine witnesses; to enter complaints; to cause witnesses and parties implicated to be bound over to appear; to conduct all criminal prosecutions which may be instituted; and to perform all other duties which shall be necessary to a full and fair judicial investigation and determination of the alleged offences.

That our government was adequate to the punishment of crimes and the protection of innocence, is the belief of all who are best acquainted with its principles. Hitherto justice has been administered without any arbitrary stretch of power or any violation of constitutional principles by the constituted authorities, and without the interference of any private citizens not clothed with publick authority. By exerting the power of the government in a constitutional manner, we can show that the present instance need not form an exception to the general course of justice. All experience teaches us, that designing men will be found ready always to avail themselves of a strong and honest publick feeling, to pervert

it to their own selfish purposes. Any such attempts will be most effectually prevented by the interposition of the government; because it will then be perceived that all individual interference will be unnecessary,--then the publick mind will be preserved from all unnecessary agitation and prejudice—fair and impartial trials will be secured to those who may be accused, and the course of justice will be steady, uniform, and effectual. Calm inquiry will succeed feverish conjecture; deliberate decision will take the place of impatient prejudice; and the impartial, unbiassed judgment of independent juries, will vindicate the law and establish the vigour and efficacy of our institutions.

NATHANIEL PITCHER.

Albany, March 18th, 1828.

On Friday the 21st of March, 1828, Mr. Spencer, from the committee on the judiciary, to whom was referred the message of the Lieut. Governour recommending the adoption of Legislative measures to ensure the detection and punishment of the persons concerned in the forcible removal of William Morgan, reported a bill in pursuance of the above recommendation.

On the 25th of March, 1828, the merits of the bill brought in by Mr. Spencer were discussed in the Senate, and on the 4th of April following, in the Assembly. The bill afterwards became a law, (three only in the Senate opposing it, of whom Mr. Crary, the late anti-masonick candidate for Lieut. Governour was one, and seven in the Assembly,) and Daniel Mosely, Esq. of Onondaga county, was subsequently appointed Commissioner.

The law, however, did not meet the approbation of anti-masons, for two reasons.

In the first place it did not originate with them.—This was of course conclusive. Experience has since

shown that no measure, however wise or politick, is entitled to their support, unless it originated with them, or was nursed and brought into existence by their exertions.

In the second place, the law did not contain that ferocity of aspect, which it was thought by some the occasion required. Its object was merely to provide for the detection and punishment of guilt. As this was but a small part of what they conceived was to be effected by the united exertions of so many patriots, it fell short of their anticipations.

Mr. Mosely therefore was immediately assailed by all the anti-masonick presses, and in the subsequent discharge of his official duties, did not, it is said, receive that cordial aid which could have been desired. Mr. Mosely being a gentleman of too much integrity, and having too high a regard for his own character to be accessary in any way to the increase of the prevailing excitement, aimed only to discharge his duties and execute his trust. He did not, like some of the Lewiston Committee, send letters about the country for political effect. Nor did he exhibit the hair of Monroe as Morgan's, for a similar purpose.—Nor did he carry pieces of plank from Fort Niagara, stained with tan bark, in his pocket, and represent them as being stained with Morgan's blood. Nor did he publish in the newspapers his intention to prosecute certain individuals by name, in order to give them an opportunity to escape. He was therefore denounced, and when he became at the fall election in 1828, the republican candidate for senator in the 7th district, his election was defeated by their exertions.

Mr. Moseley was afterwards appointed circuit judge in the place of Lieut. Governour Throop, and Mr. Spencer, a Commissioner under the above act, continued in force for two years ensuing.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Further Proceedings in the Legislature of this State—Proceedings in Congress relative to the Morgan affair.

A meeting of antimasonick delegates from a number of the western counties in this state, held at Le Roy in the county of Genesee, during the winter of 1828, among other things resolved to present memorials to the Legislature of New-York, and also to Congress, both of which were then in session. Their object in so doing, it can hardly be supposed was any other than to bring themselves and the Morgan affair into publick notoriety.

If the existing laws were defective, they knew perfectly well that no law could be passed consistent with the constitution to punish an offence already committed, and of course that nothing which had before occurred could in any event be a proper subject of national or state legislation—that it was only a subject of executive or judicial inquiry.

In their memorial to the Legislature of this State, they prayed for the abolition of extra-judicial oaths. It did not perhaps occur to them that the only documents on which their previous application for a similar law were verified by oaths of this description, or

that all trials in ecclesiastical courts were conducted by, and decisions had, predicated on them alone.—Nor did they probably reflect how often and how unnecessarily oaths of this nature had been administered by them and through their agency to promote their views. Nor did it probably occur to them that extra-judicial oaths were not at the time recognized by law, and of course that such a law was wholly unnecessary. Still, however, with a view to bring the subject before the Legislature, Mr. Childs, of Rochester, an anti-masonick member of Assembly from the county of Monroe, on the 18th of March, 1828, presented the memorial above alluded to, which was referred to a select committee, consisting of Mr. Childs, Mr. Granger, and Mr. Wardwell.

Mr. Childs afterwards reported a bill making it penal to administer such oaths, but never moved it in the House, and of course it never became a subject of discussion.

The memorial to Congress was presented by Mr. Tracy, of the 29th Congressional district, on the 12th of May, 1828, and a motion at the same time made for its reference to the committee on the judiciary. The memorial prayed that an inquiry should be instituted with a view to ascertain whether Morgan was imprisoned at Fort Niagara, and if so, by whom and by what authority.

It having been judicially determined that Fort Niagara is within the jurisdiction of this state, and of course that the persons residing there, whether in the employment of government or not, are amenable to the laws of New-York, the petitioners could have had no other object than to make noise.

It was discussed however in the House of Representatives, by Mr. Barbour of Virginia, Mr. Wright of Ohio, Mr. Storrs of this state, and others, and admitted by all to be a subject with which they, in their legislative capacity, had nothing to do. It was therefore referred to the President, (Mr. Adams) since which time it has never been heard from.

CHAPTER XXV.

The case of Col. King and Capt. Hyde.

William King, who has been branded as a fugitive from justice—who has been accused not only of participation in Morgan's abduction, but also in his murder, for many years was a resident of the county of Niagara. Possessed of many estimable virtues, and being highly respected in his neighbourhood, he obtained the confidence of his fellow citizens, and once represented that county in the Assembly. Possessing also the confidence of his country and its government, he obtained some years ago the appointment of agent for three of its military posts—Niagara, Plattsburgh, and Michilimackinack. The abandonment of them by government, left him with a family of twelve children without support. Having no capital at his command, he did not conceive that a sufficient inducement was offered him any longer to remain; and therefore with that spirit of enterprise which constitutes so interesting a feature in the American character, resolved once more to plunge into the western forests. Having no definite place in

view, he took leave of his family in the winter of 1827, with the cheering hope that he should be able in a short time to provide them with a home. He took his departure in the first place for Albany, where he received an appointment from the late Governour Clinton, to transact some business for the state at Washington—to which place he repaired, and there remained till the 7th of February, 1827. During his stay at Washington, he received from the late Secretary of War, Mr. Barbour, afterwards minister at the Court of St. James, the appointment of Sutler for Cantonment Towson in the Arkansas territory, on the Red river, about 1200 miles above its junction with the Mississippi. On the 10th of February, 1827, he left Baltimore, and arrived at Cantonment Towson by the way of New Orleans, on the first of April following, and established himself in business. It was there that he received information afterwards, for the first time, that his name was connected in the publick papers with Morgan's abduction.

As soon as he was apprised of this circumstance, he resolved to return and abide the justice of his country. While making arrangements with that view, he was informed by some one who overheard a conversation between some strangers who had just arrived at that post, and Capt. Hyde, its commanding officer, that he was pursued. He thereupon expressed a perfect willingness to be arrested in case he was suspected of violating the laws of his country, but on being told that he was to be carried in irons back to his native state, he chose not to return in that way, and therefore went to the house of a friend, about ten miles distant, where he remained till assu-

red of their departure. He then completed his arrangements as soon as possible, and by travelling day and night a distance of nearly 4000 miles, arrived in the county of Niagara soon after his pursuers' return.

Col. King having been publickly accused, as already stated, of Morgan's murder—having fled from the state, as it was supposed, to elude its justice, and the place of his residence having with certainty been ascertained—Burrage Smith and John Whitney of Rochester, having also been accused of Morgan's abduction, and having also fled as it was supposed for a similar purpose, Mr. Garlinghouse, the Sheriff of Ontario, and Mr. Bates, its former Sheriff, accompanied by a Mr. Mead, on the 13th of December, 1827, being vested with authority for that purpose, left Canandaigua in order to arrest them. They arrived at Cantonment Towson, in the Arkansas Territory, on the 14th of February, 1828, immediately made known their business, presented their authority to Capt. Hyde, who then commanded at that fort, and desired his aid. Capt. Hyde refused to aid in the arrest of Col. King, but directed an officer to accompany them to Col. King's store. On arriving there they were informed that King (apprised of their pursuit, in the manner above related) had gone. Presuming that further pursuit would be hopeless, they retraced their steps, and on the first of April, 1828, made their report to Lieut. Governour Pitcher, at Albany. On the 17th of May Col. King returned, and published in the Lockport Journal the following card.

"*To Messrs. Garlinghouse and Bates*: The undersigned asks leave to inform them that he has returned to the county of

Niagara, where he can be found, and is ready to transact any business that they may have with him. WM. KING."

The return of Col. King, at this particular time, created the utmost surprise. Men who had abused him in the harshest terms during his absence, immediately became (at least to all appearance) his most ardent friends. The load of publick infamy under which he had suffered was at once removed. Those good feelings of which he had participated so largely in former times, resumed their accustomed influence. And the tongue of slander, which had "out-venomed all the worms of Nile," lost apparently some of its fangs.

During his absence, efforts had been made to indict him for murder, but failed of success. He was however indicted for a misdemeanour, but no attempts on his return were made to arrest him. On the second day thereafter he went of his own accord to Lewiston, and was recognised himself in the sum of $1000, with two sureties in the sum of $500 each, for his appearance at the next court. On the 27th of May he published an address to the publick, containg a statement of the facts before related.

Notwithstanding his return in May, 1828, his case has never been brought to trial. His business in the fall of that year requiring his absence, a "hue and cry" was immediately raised against him in the anti-masonick papers, and the terms "fugitive and murderer" were once more connected with his name.—He has again returned, and awaits his trial. It is therefore but common justice to suspend till a judicial investigation can be had, our opinion of his innocence or his guilt.

John Whitney, of Rochester, afterwards returned, and is now a resident of that village.

Immediately after the failure of Messrs. Garlinghouse and Bates to arrest Col. King was communicated to the war Department, orders were issued for the arrest of catp. Hyde, on acharge of refusing obedience to the instructions of that Department in relation to Col. King; and that officer was directed to repair forthwith to the city of New-York for trial. No court however for that purpose has been convened. Whether the failure to procure an indictment against Col. King for murder, or his voluntary return and submission to legal authority, or some other cause has prevented, I have not been able to ascertain.

As the conduct of Capt. Hyde on that occasion has been the subject of frequent animadversion, a few remarks at this time in relation thereto, seems to be called for by a regard for justice to the accused.

Capt. Hyde it will be recollected was the commanding officer of a fortress located in an extensive wilderness, and remote from the habitations of civilized life. The bigotted Spaniard of Texas, and the ferocious savage, were his only neighbours. When therefore a stranger, and particularly one of Col. King's appearance and manners, with credentials from his government, arrived at so retired a post, it is perfectly natural that an interest should at once have been created in his behalf.

Friendship in a station like this immediately attains its perfect growth. It is neither chilled by the blasts of adversity, nor frozen by "the nameless ills that flesh is heir to." Nor is it ushered into being or sustained in its precarious existence by the anticipa-

tion of future returns. It flows from the heart as pure as the water from its fountain, and free as the air that rustles the forests leaves. "The shepherd in Virgil grew acquainted with love, and found him a native of the rocks." It may perhaps be so with friendship. Col. King's reception at Fort Towson ought not therefore to excite surprise. Nor is it singular, when strangers appeared at the quarters of its commanding officer, demanding the surrender of their victim, and more especially when it was announced that that victim was to be bound in chains and transported as a criminal through the land--I say it is not singular that friendship, as it exists amid perils and dangers, as it is taught and practised in the wild and solitary wastes, should have interposed her aid.

That Capt. Hyde ever took any measures to prevent Col. King's arrest, has never been proved. It rests wholly upon suspicion ; and upon the suspicion too, of men who must have felt great interest in the success of an expedition undertaken at so much hazard, and accomplished by so much toil.

Col. King informs us that he was apprised of their pursuit by a gentleman who overheard the conversation between Capt. Hyde and some strangers, and I am not aware of the existence of any reasons for doubting his veracity.

Suppose however for a moment that Col. King did in fact receive information that he was pursued from Capt. Hyde,his voluntary return and subsequent journey of 4000 miles on purpose to meet the charge, instead of being brought in chains and exhibited as a publick show, will it is hoped in some measure parry the charge.

When Louis the 18th by the aid of foreign bayonets was placed on the Gallic throne, the adherents of Napoleon, with certain exceptions, were permitted on sending in their adhesion, to claim the royal pardon. Lavalette, who had been a distinguished officer in the army of the Emperor, was one of those proscribed, or one who had neglected or refused to send in his adhesion. He was therefore arrested and cast into prison. Each succeeding day was supposed by him to be the last. During this period of anxiety and suspense, his prison doors were unexpectedly opened, and who should enter but the partner of his bosom. She proposed to him that he should exchange clothes with her and flee. He did so, and left his prison in the disguise of a woman. He repaired immediately to the apartments of Sir Robert Wilson, a British officer of extensive renown, then residing at Paris, announced his name and the manner of his escape, and desired his aid. Sir Robert, impressed by the military air and the confidence thus reposed, with respect for the man before him, and inspired with that romantick chivalry which the brave feel for the brave, did not for a moment hesitate to respond in the affirmative to this appeal, and conducted him in triumph without the realm. Madam Lavalette overcome by the horrours of a dungeon and fears for her husband's safety, became suddenly deranged, and was consigned to a hospital of maniacks, instead of her husband's arms. Sir Robert was afterwards arrested as an accessary to his escape, but was never put upon his trial.

I do not cite the case of Lavalette for the purpose of comparing it with Col. King's, or to justify Capt.

Hyde by the example of Sir Robert Wilson, but merely to show that in other countries friendship's sacred claim has animated with impunity the soldier's bosom, and expanded the soldier's heart.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Miscellaneous events--Bruce's trial for the abduction of Morgan--Thurlow Weed's case--Johnson Goodwill.

The prominent facts attending Morgan's abduction, and the principal events which have grown out of it, have now been reviewed. Before however we proceed to consider the effects which the extraordinary course pursued by those to whom their investigation was intrusted has thus far produced upon the morals, the politicks, and the religion of that portion of our state which has been the theatre of its principal operations, a few miscellaneous events demand our notice.

Bruce, Turner and Darrow of Lockport, were indicted among others, for a conspiracy to carry off Morgan, and also for his abduction. They were tried at the court of General Sessions, held at Canandaigua in the county of Ontario, on the 20th of August 1828. The indictments against Turner and Darrow having been found upon the testimony of Giddings alone, and Giddings having been rejected by the Court as an incompetent witness, on account of his Atheism, and no other testimony being offered to implicate them or either of them, were ofcourse acquit-

ted. Bruce was convicted. Exceptions were taken to the indictment in Bruce's case, which were carried up to the Supreme Court of this State for their advice. Those exceptions have since been argued and decided against the defendant, and at the last court of General Sessions held for the county of Ontario, on the 23d day of May, 1829, Bruce was sentenced to imprisonment in the county jail, for two years and four months.

John Whitney, whose voluntary return is mentioned in the preceding chapter, was also tried, convicted and sentenced to be imprisoned one year and three months in the county jail.

James Gillis was also tried. The Jury, however, in his case could not agree, and of course there was no verdict.

Some other indictments are pending, and remain yet to be disposed of. "The Morgan trials," however, are not at this time the subject of frequent conversation, they excite no peculiar interest, and of course are tried as other cases are tried. The controversy having become altogether political, anti-masons themselves seem not to desire the rigid prosecution of those suspected. Could they exhibit proof of Morgan's murder, and procure the conviction of some one or more, it would probably gratify the feelings of individuals among them, but at the same time it would "spoil the trade," and ruin forever the hopes of those whose political existence is now, and for a long time has been wholly sustained by having before the publick a subject of constant irritation. When the guilty shall have been punished, honest men will be satisfied and not before. It is the voice of faction

An indictment of some interest is now pending in the county of Monroe, against the editor of the Monroe Republican, on the complaint of Thurlow Weed, who has been a prominent leader under Miller and Southwick, in the late anti-masonick party, and has taken an active, efficient, and responsible part in eliciting or smothering the truth, and which remains yet to be seen. The defendant in his paper, it is said, charged Weed with having shaved or stripped off the hair and whiskers on the body found in Carlton, preparatory to the second inquest, in order that it might resemble Morgan's. The defendant, we are informed, intends to justify the charge, the trial must therefore be one of interest.

A number of slander suits in behalf of masons have ben tried and recoveries had for accusations made in relation to the Morgan affair, and some are still pending.

Col. Goodwill of Batavia, during the winter of 1828, in passing a bridge across the Tonawanta Creek in a cutter with Mrs. Goodwill, was accidentally thrown off a steep bank, a distance of 30 or 40 feet—he was himself much injured, and the life of Mrs. G. was for some time despaired of. While she was confined to her bed, and in the most excruciating agony, Mr. Southwick, editor of the National Observer, who is deservedly at the head of his party, after speaking of some papers which he alleged Col. Goodwill had assisted others to obtain on an attachment against Morgan, says: "No redress has yet been obtained, except by an act of Divine Providence, which precipitated one of them over a bridge in a sleigh, his horse taking fright, by which he came near having his

neck broke: this was the man, who, after he had rifled or carried off her trunk, which he had no business to touch, had the cruel satisfaction of telling Mrs. Morgan, with a masonick grin, that he had taken her husband to jail! Well, indeed, was he thrown off the bridge; for if he had fallen from a precipice fifty thousand feet high, into a volcano like Ætna or Vesuvius, he would have been justly served for outraging the feelings of a woman in deep distress and agony of mind for the fate of her husband. Perdition seize such monsters!"

The above remarks, though from the pen of an anti-masonick candidate for Governour, would not have received a place in this narrative, had not the sentiments therein contained, been received and adopted by his followers in this vicinity. They therefore deserve consideration as well on account of the high source from which they emanated, as on account of their being adopted by men who claim to be the guardians of publick morals, and the exclusive patrons of our holy religion, which breathes peace and good will to man.

To repeat the expressions of individual anti-masons, would be as unjust as to judge of the fraternity by the conduct of a few, and to test their principles by the declarations of its foolish, depraved and inconsiderate members. Although materials of that kind exist in abundance, we have no use for them here, and shall therefore pass over them in sorrow and in silence.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Russel Colvin.

In referring to instances of popular excitement, I inadvertently omitted the case of Russel Colvin, for whose supposed murder Stephen and Jesse Boorn, in a neighbouring state, were sentenced to be hanged. The case is so analogous to the one which has recently excited so much interest and attention here, that it deserves to be attentively perused.

Russel Colvin formerly resided at Manchester Vermont, and some years ago left that place under circumstances which induced strong suspicions of his having been murdered. Stephen and Jesse Boorn resided at that time in his vicinity—were men in some respects of exceptionable characters, and had had some difficulty with Colvin. Suspicions of course, were at once excited, that they were his murderers. The circumstances, however, were not of such a nature as to justify criminal proceedings against them till some years afterwards.

One Merrill, a notorious scoundrel, being confined on a criminal charge in jail with the Boorns, pretended that they had confessed to him their guilt. This together with the circumstances already existing, left no doubt in the publick mind of Colvin's murder, and the Boorns' participation therein. The Boorns were therefore arrested, and the publick had already pronounced their doom, even before they were put upon trial. Merrill was admitted to bail, and at once made a man of consequence. The circumstances in this as in every case of the like kind,

being magnified, the feelings of the people became so excited against the accused, that a man for expressing a belief in their innocence, and a desire for their acquittal, was considered unworthy of confidence or respect, and was even threatened with violence.

On their trial, Merrill gave testimony against them and immediately fled into the state of New-York, where he was afterwards convicted of other crimes and sentenced to the State prison for life. The Boorns were convicted and sentenced to be hanged. The testimony, however, did not appear so conclusive to those residing at a distance, who had not participated in the popular feeling as to those in that vicinity. The Governour of Vermont therefore respited their sentence till the meeting of the next Legislature, by which the punishment of one of those convicted was commuted to imprisonment in the state prison for life, and the other was directed to be hanged. One was accordingly removed to the state prison at Windsor, where he was undergoing the sentence of the law, and the other was preparing for the awful fate that awaited him, when Colvin, for whose supposed murder the Boorns had been sentenced to death, was unexpectedly and by accident found residing in obscurity in this state.

By the vigilance and humanity of the Common Council of New-York, he was taken, (after having been absent and supposed by his neighbours to have been dead about seven years,) to Manchester in Vermont where he arrived just in time to save the life of an innocent victim, who, but for their timely interference must in a few days have paid the forfeit of a crime supposed and proved to have been committed, but of which he was entirely innocent.

Colvin in passing through Albany on his way to Vermont, reaped a rich harvest by exhibiting himself in the museum during the winter of 1819—20, at 25 cents a sight.

The circumstances to prove the death of Colvin, were stronger than any which now exist in relation to the death of Morgan, and the testimony of Merrill was entitled, at least, to as much credit as Gidding's. The jury without doubt, reasoned correctly upon the evidence before them, and the conviction of the accused, was unquestionably predicated upon what most men would regard as conclusive proof.

It shows, however, the fallacy of human testimony, and the danger of introducing popular excitement into Courts of Justice.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Principles of Anti-Masonry--their effect on publick morals.

In reviewing the principles of anti-masonry, and considering their effect on publick morals, serious difficulties meet us at the threshold. Being, as they are, of recent origin, particularly in this country, and having formed as yet no distinctive character, their effect in some measure is still problematical. Attempts to introduce them into Spain, it is true, were made a few years since by the bigotted Ferdinand. The Pope too once issued his bull for the suppression of masonick lodges. Masonry, however, still exists both in Spain and Italy.

Sufficient has already been developed during the last two years, to convince impartial minds that anti-

masonry at all events is not "a saving ordinance." And some of its most zealous votaries, particularly those who have not obtained that influence and power to which by their zeal they supposed themselves entitled, are beginning to doubt whether it is calculated to promote their temporal, to say nothing of their eternal, welfare.

In the discussion of this subject, it becomes necessary in the first place to define the term anti-masonry, and in so doing we may perhaps be enabled to ascertain its principles, and afterwards determine whether certain effects, known and acknowledged by all to exist, are imputable to anti-masonry, or to some other cause.

It has of late become fashionable (with what justice we shall endeavour bye and bye to show) to attribute all the evils under which we groan to the existence of free masonry; and many suppose, or pretend, that its annihilation is absolutely necessary to hasten on those halcyon days which the christian and the patriot anticipate with so much ardor.

Mr. Southwick, who may with propriety be regarded as the oracle of his party, in the National Observer, says:—

"Anti-masonry sprung from the throne of God, and under his Almighty wings, it will conquer "Hell's master piece," and redeem our country from vile slavery and galling chains—from eternal disgrace, from everlasting ruin and degradation. The man who hesitates to support such a cause, stabs his country and dishonours his Creator. Let no such man be trusted—let him live neglected and die unpitied and despised, and let no monument tell his name or

point to the spot where "his recreant ashes pollute the soil that gave him birth."

Some anti-masons, however, it is believed do not subscribe to this blasphemous effusion of fanaticism, nor are they yet prepared to regard it as divine.—Anti-masonry here is generally supposed to consist in opposition to masonry—and anti-masons to be those who embrace its doctrines. Although this definition may originally have been correct, it does not of course follow that all professing anti-masons, particularly at this time, are opposed to masonry. A part of them at least have given strong indications that their anti-masonry consists in opposition to masons only, and not to the institution.

Some who have been expelled from masonick lodges—some who have heretofore sought admission and failed of success—some who have long been members, and have not received the recompense due to their fancied merits—some who have felt aggrieved by the conduct of individual masons—and some too, it is said, for political purposes, have enlisted under its triumphant banners. Some have become anti-masons by listening to the slanderous tales a thousand times refuted, which have been circulated by artful and designing demagogues through the country, and some have become so purely from principle. How large a portion of each is included under this general term, it is impossible to ascertain without scrutinizing the motives of every individual, and as that is impossible with the means allotted to erring mortals, and belongs exclusively to that being to whom the secret thoughts and intents of all hearts are known, we shall not make the attempt.

Reformers in almost every age have proposed to themselves and to their followers, some definite object, and usually have suggested some plan for ameliorating the condition of human kind. The leaders, however, in the crusade now commenced, and which they anticipate, will shortly be conducted to a successful issue, have not, I believe, suggested a plan even for experiment.

Masonry has existed for some time among us, and during that period our country has been prosperous and happy. Our population has increased in a ratio before unknown. Wealth has filled our garners. The arts and sciences have flourished. Religion has expanded her charms, and liberty taken up her abode. "Our canvass has whitened every sea," and our name is respected in every clime. Masons hitherto, not because they were masons, but because they were men of virtue, of talents, and integrity, have in common with their fellow citizens, and without distinction, participated in the highest honours which our state and nation could bestow. The attempt, therefore, to denounce them at this time, reminds us of a person, who in perfect health, took physick and died. As a warning to others he directed the following inscription to be engraved on his monument: "I was well, I sought to be better—I took physick and here I am."

To say that the object of every anti-mason is to put down the masons with a view to rise on their ruins, would be saying more than is admitted, and more, probably, than is true. Still, that such is the object of many, and particularly of their leaders, is too obvious to require elucidation. Facts speak for themselves.

Conceding however, for a moment, that their motives are pure, the question still recurs: What objects are in truth to be attained, and what means are to be employed in order to attain them.

A man's conduct is not often better than his principles, and frequently not as good—men sometimes err when their principles are all on the side of rectitude. Were we able therefore, to ascertain what the principles of anti-masonry are, we should probably be able at the same time to determine in some measure their effects. As anti-masons, however, have not deigned to avow them, they are left to be collected from their private conduct and publick acts.

The first and most obvious principle of anti-masonry seems to consist in implicit homage to its leaders, without reference to their moral, political, or religious worth.

It is a maxim of the English law that the King can do no wrong. The Pope is said to be infallible, and the English Church we are told is never in the wrong. Whether the introduction of such a principle into this country, and the practical exposition of it entrusted to the several Morgan committees, is calculated to improve our moral or political condition, is at all events doubtful. We have already witnessed some of its effects on a small scale, and have yet to learn whether its entire ascendancy will produce a differed result. A certain quack once administered cabbage as medicine to a shoemaker, and cured him. Pleased with his success, he repeated it on a tailor, and killed him. He thereupon entered in his journal, that "cabbage is good for shoemakers, but not for tailors." Although anti-masonry has hither-

to failed of producing those happy results in this vicinity so confidently expected, it does not of course follow that it will not elsewhere. Sufficient has already been disclosed in the progress of this narrative, to show that we are in some respects a "peculiar people." Its failure here ought not therefore to deter others (who may be so inclined) from repeating the experiment.

Another prominent principle of anti-masonry consists in denouncing, not only all masons indiscriminately, but all those who will not denounce them.

In that particular it resembles Balak, king of Moab, who not content with cursing Israel himself, sent for Balaam to curse them too. For that purpose Princes were employed as messengers, and the most splendid offers were made. "Let nothing, says the sacred historian, (Numbers XXII. 16-17.) hinder thee from coming unto me, for I will promote thee unto very great honour, and I will do whatever thou sayest unto me. Come therefore, I pray thee, and curse this people." The Lord, however, interposed his protecting arm, and sent his angel, who stood "in the way, and a sword drawn in his hand." Balaam therefore, bowed down his head and fell on his face. "The Lord," said Balaam unto Balak, "hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, nor hath he seen perverseness in Israel." The anticipated curses were therefore averted, and a blessing pronounced in their stead.

Anti-masonry separate from the attainment of power which it professes to acquire by inculcating implicit homage to it leaders, and by dealing "death and damnation round the land," seems to have no ob-

ject. "Havock and spoil and ruin are its gain." Cold as the icicle that hangs on Norway's cliff—cheerless as the winter amid polar snows—obdurate as the Tiger in its native forest—and deceptive as the Crocodile in its native fen, it can neither be approached by sighs or tears. Nothing but submission to its dictates and promised aid in the diffusion of its terrors, can save its victims or avert the meditated blow.

The Lion is said sometimes to spare its prey, to kill merely for the purpose of destroying, and to benefit others is the province of a Jackall.

Anti-masonry therefore, it can hardly be supposed, would yet have produced many happy results; nor is it, we believe, pretended that it ever has.

Its evils however, are more obvious. It has severed the ties of kindred—it has destroyed the peace of families—it has interrupted the pleasures of social intercourse—it has armed in almost deadly strife, one portion of community against the other—it has caused the violation of law, of principle and of justice—it has entered our courts—it has entered our Sanctuaries, and it has entered our schools and seminaries of learning. Fraud, deception and hypocrisy, have marked its course. Injustice and oppression have accompanied its progress, and a wide waste of moral ruin has followed in its train.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Political history of Anti-masonry—Campaign of 1827—Do. of 1828—Nomination of Mr. Southwick for Governour, Col. Miller for Clerk, and Mr. Hascall for Assembly—Mr. Hartwell's letter to President Adams—Mr. Adams' reply.

That the abduction of Morgan was a foolish, inconsiderate, and depraved act, we need not again repeat. That it should have produced an excitement of great interest, ought not to excite surprise. Had it been otherwise, the patriot would have looked forward with fearful apprehensions for the safety of our Republick. But that this excitement should have been perverted, as it has been by artful demagogues, to sinister purposes, and have been made the instrument of personal vengeance, will forever remain a foul blot on the American character, and should it hereafter become the means of elevating unworthy men to places of trust, of profit, or of power, it surely must be deprecated and deplored.

While on this subject we wish to have it distinctly understood that those who participated in that offence or justified it afterwards, have forfeited the confidence and deserve the reprehension of a virtuous and insulted commuuity. At the same time we wish to have it as distinctly understood, that those members of the fraternity who were not accessary before, at the time, or afterwards, to its commission, deserve now, as well as before, the confidence of their country; and especially that those who are not masons, who have uniformly condemned the outrage, but have

since refused to join in this unholy crusade against the innocent, are entitled to the highest applause.

Mr. Jefferson in his inaugural speech expressed the fond but delusive hope that the time would shortly arrive, when it would not be asked whether the candidate for publick favour was a republican or a federalist, but whether he was honest, whether he was capable, and whether he was faithful to the constitution and government of his country. Although hopes of this nature are for the present scattered to the four winds of heaven—although the only inquiry with a certain party in this vicinity now, is whether the candidate be a thorough anti-mason or not, it so happens, fortunately for our country, that such enquiries are confined principally to demagogues. The good sense and intelligence remaining among us, which has hitherto advanced our glory, unquestionably will in a short time redeem our character, and dispel this popular delusion.

Preparatory to a consideration of the subject now proposed, we beg liberty in the first place to call the attention of our readers to the character of a demagogue. It is from the pen of the venerable Dr. Scott, a name familiar to all. His remarks in relation to "the policy of wicked men in drawing in respectable persons to give an unintended and unsuspected countenance to the basest designs," it is hoped will be read with that interest which their importance deserves.

"They are commonly most ambitious of authority, who least understand its duties, and could least endure its burdens. But when ambition prompts, the most self-indulgent assume the appearance of diligence, and the most haughty, that of affability and condescension! and whilst men aspire

to the pinnacle of grandeur, they for the time pay the most abject court to the meanest of the mob! Such fawning sons of ambition are peculiar to no age or nation: but let every wise and honest man shun them as a pestilence. They make their way by openly or obliquely traducing the characters, or censuring the measures of their rulers; and the wisdom and perfection of an angel would be no security against their malignant insinuations. As self-love cannot but murmur at impartiality, and men are generally discontented and fond of change, these demagogues always have proper persons on whom to practice. By joining in their groundless complaints, they find they feed their discontent; by flattering their persons, and approving their cause, they humour their pride; and by lavish promises, (which cost and mean nothing,) of what they would do if they were in power, they excite their sanguine hopes of greater felicity; and by a voluble tongue and insinuating address, personal accomplishments, and consummate impudence, they steal the hearts of the people, and prepare the way for popular tumults, insurrections, and rebellion. For such is human nature, that these arts and attainments go much further in gaining the favour of the multitude, than wisdom and justice, truth and piety, or the most important and long continued services! This is the old hackneyed way for men, destitute of conscience or honour, to wind themselves into important stations; and yet it is as much practised, and as little suspected, as if it were quite a new discovery! No wise and good man, therefore, should on any account promise himself the continuance of popular favour, or be cast down if he meet with treachery and ingratitude; yet, in general, we may perceive the righteousness of God in the basest treatment which we can receive from man; and may thence be reminded to humble ourselves before him. No villany can be termed complete, which is not disguised under the mask of religion;* especially at those times when the profession of Godliness is treated with gen-

*Peculiarly applicable to the Henrietta resolutions; to which meeting, modern Theology must, I think, be vastly indebted for their discovery of the fulfilment of a certain prophecy.

eral respect. The policy of wicked men and the subtlety of Satan are exerted to the utmost, in drawing in respectable persons to give an unintended and unsuspected countenance to the basest designs; by which those sentiments and practices acquire a degree of regard to which, otherwise, they were not at all entitled: and none so much strengthen the hands of profligates or infidels, as apostate professors."

Anti-masonry assumed a political character soon after the commencement of its existence. Of this position, their several publick meetings afford conclusive proof. To them alone it is indebted for all its consequence. The several Morgan committees, so long as they continued to discharge the duties assigned them, and confined their exertions to the legitimate objects of their creation, received the approbation of the wise and good, and our country was not distracted by the conflicts of party. Facts developed at an early day, satisfied all accustomed to reflect, that an offence had been committed, serious in its nature and important in its consequences. That it deserved the attention of courts and juries, was universally conceded. The administration of justice, however, disdains all party aid. Many therefore could not perceive the necessity of its interference. The folly, or rather the indiscretion of those to whom the management of this affair had unfortunately been intrusted, without doubt prevented a part of those suspected from being arrested and tried. This was a subject of extreme regret. Some members of the committee of course were censured. The failure of justice so loudly complained of, was imputed by many to their want of judgment or integrity. Collision was produced. The several committees endeavoured to repel the charge, and in order to re-

move the gathering odium from themselves, like Nero fiddling when Rome was burning, charged its failure to the masons. They, as well as the Christians at Rome, having become odious in the publick eye, began immediately to be suspected as its cause. The committee perceiving with what avidity the most improbable tales were greedily devoured, at once vociferously proclaimed that justice was perverted, by masonick influence, from its course; that no member of the fraternity, however guilty, could be brought to trial with any prospect of success. Aware of the odium attached to masonry, and of their power to assail with impunity, and conscious too of their growing popularity, they redoubled their efforts, and at once assumed the direction of politicks, as they had done in morals.

We have already remarked that in the spring of 1827, meetings were held in different towns, at which the most inflammatory resolutions were adopted respecting masons. At the regular town meetings held thereafter in this vicinity, they were generally proscribed, and in many cases, though in other respects worthy, lost their election because they were masons. The offices, however, being generally unimportant, no particular inconvenience was sustained by the publick, although many who had no other pretension than zeal for anti-masonry, were in some cases elected to fill them.

In the fall of 1827, the anti-masonick party as such, took the field. The anti-masonick committee gave notice of an anti-masonick convention, to be held at Warsaw in the county of Genesee, for the purpose of nominating a Senator. A republican convention was

held at Batavia for a similar purpose, on the day preceding the one to be held at Warsaw, at which Timothy H. Porter, Esq. of the county of Cattaraugus, who had once been a member of the Senate, and also a member of Congress, was put in nomination. One George A. S. Crooker, Esq. attended the convention held at Batavia, as a delegate from the county of Cattaraugus. From intimations thrown out by Mr. Crooker, it was thought by some that he desired the nomination. But as he was a stranger to the whole convention, and had never scarcely been heard of before, it was deemed inexpedient, at that time, to gratify his wishes. He therefore took Warsaw in his way home, and accidentally, it is said, stumbled upon the anti-masonick convention while it was yet in session. He did not, we are informed, present his credentials, because they had already spent their force. He lingered however, there for some time, awaiting its deliberations, until, finally after a little "billing and cooing," he was by a unanimous vote, nominated as the anti-masonick candidate. A flaming handbill in glaring capitals, was immediately issued and circulated throughout the district, announcing the important intelligence, that George A. S. Crooker, Esq. of the county of Cattaraugus, was nominated as a candidate for the Senate, and calling upon all anti-masons, as they regarded their allegiance, to give him their support. His crimes, which before were red as scarlet, were made white as wool. The plastick hand of anti-masonry, immediately transformed him into a patriot of the first standing for talents and integrity, for private worth and publick virtue. Votes were printed and circu-

lated with great industry and exertion, and nothing was apparently wanting to insure his election.

Unfortunately, however, for Mr. Crooker, a short time before, he had written a letter to the Grand Lodge of the State, and recommended Br. ———, as an object of its charity. In that letter, he stated that he was a mason. Mr. Crooker's nomination for the Senate elicited inquiry. The fact that such a letter had been written to the Grand Lodge, was fresh in the recollection of some of its members. Search was therefore made among its records, and the original was found. This letter was afterwards delivered to the Morgan committee. No sooner was it ascertained that Mr. Crooker was a mason, than inquiries were instituted in relation to his conduct while a resident of Livingston county some time before. His character, which unquestionably would have escaped their scrutiny had he not been a mason, was found in such inquiry to be bad. He was therefore denounced by the Morgan committee, and instantly annihilated. In the county of Genesee he received but 49 votes, Mr. Porter 3,941 and in other counties about in the same proportion. As some still contend, that the object of anti-masonry is not political, I refer my readers for proof, to the Circular issued by the Morgan committee on that occasion.

To the Electors of the Eighth Senatorial District.

FELLOW CITIZENS.—We have just seen an affidavit made by a gentleman of unquestionable veracity, residing at Jamestown, Chautauque county, proving that George A. S. Crooker is a member of the Sylvan Lodge of Free Masons, in Gerry, and in August last was holding communications with the Grand Lodge, and his original letter on the subject is now in our possession. We have also seen a letter from

a gentleman of unimpeachable character and respectable standing in Livingston county, stating that he is a man of bad moral character and principles. We are therefore satisfied that the members of the convention at Warsaw, by whom he was nominated, were deceived as to his character, and we deem it a sacred duty thus publickly to declare, that we think him not fit to fill the office of Senator, and we advise our personal, political and Anti-masonick friends, not to support him by their votes or influence.

Having received satisfactory information that Timothy H. Porter, is not a member of the Masonick society, and some of us being personally acquainted with him, and having confidence in his patriotism and integrity, we shall give him our cheerful and vigorous support.

Josiah Bissell, Jr. Heman Norton, Fred'k Whittlesly, Theodore F. Talbot, Samuel Works, F. F. Backus.—*Morgan Committee.*

After perusing the above, it will not, I trust, for a moment, be contended that anti-masonry is not a political institution. Should any, however, persist in doubt, I refer them for proofs to the proceedings of the late Anti-Masonick State Convention, which

"*Resolved*, That at all elections hereafter, whether general or local, anti-masonick candidates be run."

If they still have doubts, I refer them to the anti-masonick newspapers for proof, and particularly to the New-York Beacon, which openly and boldly declares, that "anti-masonry and politicks are joined together by legitimate bonds, and no hand can part them."

In the fall of 1826, Mr. Evans of Batavia, was elected to represent the 29th Congressional District in the house of Representatives of the United States. He was afterwards, in the spring of 1827, appointed local agent of the Holland Land Company, the ac-

ceptance of which, made it necessary that he should resign his seat in Congress. A new election was therefore ordered in the fall of 1827.

Phinehas L. Tracy, Esq. of this village, in opposition to the wishes of a large portion of his party, became on that occasion, the anti-masonick candidate. Possessed of respectable talents, great industry, and an ample fortune—having taken no part in the Morgan affair, until about the time of his nomination, and then barely sufficient to effect his object—having been attached to no political party for many years, and his opinion in relation to the presidential question, then beginning to be agitated, being quite uncertain, and he of course claimed by the friends of Mr. Adams and General Jackson both, his nomination was peculiarly acceptable to a large majority of the people, and he of course, was triumphantly elected.

We are not sufficiently conversant with politica anti-masonry in other counties during the campaign of 1827, to give its history, and shall not therefore make the attempt. Presuming however, that the cases stated are a fair sample of it elsewhere, we omit with less regret its particular details.

The campaign of 1828, was opened during the winter, in superiour style. One Solomon Southwick of Albany, who had a few years before been dismissed from the office of Post Master in that place, began in 1827 to make a considerable noise. He had been a member of the masonick fraternity for many years, and discovered about this time, that it was a "Hell born and Hell deserving institution." He had been a candidate for Governour once before, and received fifteen hundred or two thousand votes in the state.

He edited at the time, a paper in Albany, remarkable only for its bitter vituperation, and thought himself a suitable person to fill the executive chair. Previous to the ridiculous farce which was afterwards played off with so much success, a few seceding masons in Le Roy, wrote to Mr. Southwick desiring his presence. He repaired thither without delay, and in March 1828, was first nominated for Governour at Green's tavern in the village of Batavia. Addresses were exchanged. The nomination was accepted, and Mr. Southwick returned. Instead however, of its being echoed and re-echoed by the anti-masonick editors as anticipated, it was treated by many, only as a farce, and Mr. Southwick afterwards was induced to decline the intended honour.

A State convention of Mr. Adams' friends about this time was held at Utica, at which the Hon. Smith Thompson, one of the Judges of the Supreme Court of the United States, a gentleman of high respectability and of extensive legal and literary attainments, was nominated as a candidate for Governour, and Mr. Granger of Canandaigua, a gentleman also of respectability, was nominated for Lieut. Governour. Mr. Granger afterwards was nominated at the anti-masonick Convention held in Utica, as a candidate for Governour, and Mr. Crary of Washington county, formerly a member of the Senate of this state, for Lieutenant Governour.

Mr. Granger unwilling to unite his political destiny with a party, which from its nature and character he supposed must be ephemeral, afterwards declined the anti-masonick nomination for Governour, and accepted of his nomination for Lieut. Governour.

For this he was denounced. Judge Thompson having been written to by the Morgan committee, with a view to ascertain whether, in case they would support him and he should be elected, he would consider himself as an anti-mason, is said to have replied, that in case of success, he should consider himself the Governour of a State, and not the tool or patron of a party, he was thereupon denounced.

An opportunity was thereby afforded for the revival of Mr. Southwick's claims. A meeting was thereupon held at Le Roy, made up principally of seceding masons, fifteen altogether, including comers and goers, at which Mr. Southwick was nominated by a majority of one. This nomination, for want of a better, was echoed by some anti-masonick papers. He was afterwads nominated at other similar meetings held in different parts of the country, and supported by the whole anti-masonick party, with perfect confidence in his success.

Mr. Van Buren who is too well known to require the aid of eulogy, whose talents for years had adorned the counsels of the State and Nation was afterwards nominated with entire unanimity at the Republican Convention held in Herkimer, as a candidate for Governour, and Judge Throop of the county of Cayuga as a candidate for Lieut. Governour. Neither of them were masons, although both were proclaimed as such in the newspapers, before and at the polls during the last election. Out of 276,535 votes given in the State, Mr. Van Buren received 136,785, Judge Thompson 106,415, and Mr. Southwick 33,-335. And however strange it may appear, it is no less strange than true, that Mr. Southwick received

in the county of Genesee, 4,794, Mr. Van Buren 2,-274, and Judge Thompson 605 votes.

It having been frequently intimated that in case Mr. Southwick had not been a candidate, Judge Thompson would have succeeded, I take this occasion to observe, that a large portion of the votes given for Mr. Southwick would in that case have been given for Mr. Van Buren. The result of course would have been the same.

We have already remarked that Col. Miller, in the fall of 1828 was elected Clerk of the County of Genesee. There are some circumstances attending his nomination and election, deserving of particular notice. If anti-masonry alone, without any other qualifications, ever entitled a man to office, Col. Miller's claims were preeminent. Aware of intentions existing in the minds of some who had united themselves with the anti-masonick party after the battle had been fought and won merely for its spoils, to put down and prostrate the author of this mighty uproar—the man who had given them what little consequence they enjoyed, and fearing, himself, the result of a county Convention held under such circumstances, Col. Miller, in the summer of 1828, announced himself as a candidate for County Clerk. Supposing of course, that the party to which he was opposed, would immediately commence upon him a war of words, and thereby strengthen the rope of sand by which he and his adherents were bound together, he was alarmed at the re-publication of his address in other papers without note or comment. Abuse in this county, being the only aliment which can sustain the aspirant for office, he would probably have fallen of

his own weight, like the bird in an exhausted receiver, had not some of his own party undertaken the task which he desired and expected from his foes. His unfitness for the office to which he aspired, was acknowledged by all. Opposition therefore, from a source least expected, began gradually to unfold itself. Its progress at first was slow, but meeting with unexpected encouragement, it acquired new vigour as it progressed, and at last began to flap its wings in token of future triumph, when he distinctly told them that the support of Mr. Southwick and the nomination of himself were indispensible to their success. The leaders who had been struggling for precedence were hushed in a moment by "the master spirit of the storm," and submitted to his dictation without a murmur. A convention was called. A seceding mason was appointed its Chairman, and another its Secretary. Mr. Southwick's nomination for Governour was concurred in—Col. Miller was nominated for Clerk, and Mr. Hascall, another seceding mason, for Assembly; and a triumph crowned their efforts. The nomination of so many quondam masons as candidates, and the whole management of the convention by seceding masons, were at first calculated to excite alarm and produce jealousies among their leaders. Their motives in withdrawing from the Lodge were for a while arraigned. Experience however, has tested the policy of placing the whole power and influence of the anti-masonick party in their hands, and shown conclusively, that it is the true and perhaps the only mode of success. Whether the party will hereafter continue in submissive homage to such policy, perhaps is questionable. The Jackalls, we

are told, pursue their prey in packs on Lybia's dusty plains, until the object of their pursuit is almost within their reach, when the tawny Lion obtrudes his unwelcome visage and robs them of all their toil. Why not then in the present instance. Arnold was made a Brigadier General in the British service, and why may not others with impunity imitate so glorious an example.

The conduct of anti-masons during the election of 1828, offerds a more perfect clue to the discovery of their objects, than any thing yet disclosed. It unfolds a more perfect system of political inconsistency and evinces more hardihood in political depravity, than has hitherto degraded and disgraced the character of our state. Mr. Van Buren and Judge Throop were denounced, not because they were masons, for the knowing ones when they made the charge, knew also it was false, but because they were nominated in the usual way by a Republican Convention. Judge Thompson and Mr. Granger were also denounced because they refused to fall down and worship a phantom of their creation. Electors in favour of Mr. Adams and Mr. Rush were generally supported, because Mr. Adams said he "never was and never would be a mason." Mr. Rush however, it was conceded by all, was then, and had been for years, a prominent mason. The anti-masonick electors, true to their pledge notwithstanding, gave him their votes without one solitary exception. Mr. Coffin, the late Clerk of Genesee, a long tried and faithful servant of the pulick, who had not been in a Lodge for twenty years, was displaced to give room for a political adventurer. Mr. Hascall, who was a Knight

Templar at the time of Morgan's abduction, and an active member of the Encampment long afterwards, succeeded in his election over Gen. Churchill, who for years had been an anti-mason from principle, who was an officer during the late war with England, and a prisoner in Halifax at the time of its close.

In order to enlist anti-masons in favour of Mr. Adams, a variety of expedients were resorted to. Among others, a Mr. Hartwell of Canandaigua, who had some time before been dismissed from the office of Post-master in that village, wrote to President Adams a letter as follows :

"*Canandaigua*, 31*st March*, 1823.

To his Excellency John Q. Adams,
President of the United States.

"*Sir*—In consequence of a great many of my fellow citizens and neighbours who feel equally interested with me to know what we consider a very important fact, I take the liberty to inquire of you whether you are a mason?

"The prostration of that dangerous Institution is considered in this section of the country paramount to any other consideration, and it would give us great pleasure and satisfaction to hear directly from you, and to hear that you did not belong to that brotherhood. I have reflected upon the propriety of writing you directly for this some time past, and have finally concluded that it is undoubtedly my duty to make this inquiry, and I conclude you will most cheerfully give me an answer. I am satisfied with your administration, and shall feel very cordially disposed to support your re-election should I hear you never have been contaminated with that useless trumpery, masonry; and you may be assured that in case you have not been so unfortunate as to have joined that Society, very much can and will be done in this section of the state in your behalf upon that ground.

"Respectfully yours, &c.

(Signed) "OLIVER HARTWELL."

REPLY.

"*Washington, 19th April,* 1828.

"Oliver Hartwell, Esq. Canandaigua, N. Y.

"*Sir*—In answer to your inquiry in your letter of the 31st ult. I state that I am not, never was, and never shall be a free mason. I give you this answer, in the spirit of friendly return to the kindness with which you have made the inquiry. But unwilling to contribute in *any manner* to that excitement produced by the mysterious abduction and too probable murder of William Morgan, I request you *not to give publicity* to this letter. The deep and solemn feeling which pervades the community on this occasion, is founded on the purest principles of human virtue and of human rights. In the just and lawful pursuit of a signal vindication of the laws of nature and of the land, violated in his person, which has been undertaken, and is yet in progress, with the authority and co-operation of your legislature, I hope and trust that the fellow citizens of the sufferers will temper with the spirit of justice, the reperation of her wrongs, and in the infliction of every penalty carefully abstain from visiting upon the innocent the misdeeds of the guilty.

I am with respect your fellow citizen,

J. Q. ADAMS."

Letters had previously been addressed to Mr. Adams in order to ascertain his opinion on the subject of religion. Those he very properly refused to answer. When, however, his friend Mr. Hartwell addressed him a letter on the subject of freemasonry, and apprised him of its bearing on the Presidential contest, his letter was answered without delay. The answer however, was calculated to excite surprise. A President of the United States, the most dignified officer in the world, writing political letters to a dismissed post-master, for the purpose of enlisting the Morgan excitement into his service, was a novel spectacle to the American people. It has been pretend-

ed that such was not his object. The peculiar phraseology of the letter itself, however, refutes the assertion : particlarly the expression, "I am not, never was, and never shall be a free mason." Had Mr. Adams merely informed his friend, (as the letter was not intended for publication,) that he was not a mason, it would, in all probability have sufficiently gratified Mr. Hartwell's vanity, and produced the desired effect. When, however, he descended from the dignity of his station, and pledged himsel to Mr. Hartwell, "that he never would be a mason," the conclusion irresistably follows, that it was Mr. Adams' wish as well as his friend Mr. Hartwell's, that this excitement should administer, in part, to his ambition.

The final effect of anti-masonry on the politicks of our country, it is at present difficult to predict. The disaffected of all parties will, unquestionably unite under its banners. As no political object, however, is proposed thereby to be effected, other than to elevate designing politicians to power, and as no bond of principle unites them together, it can hardly be supposed that it will prevail to any great extent, or be of very long duration. Its practical effects where it has hitherto been triumphant, have already, in many instances, produced its downfall. Reason has began to assert its prerogative, and prejudice and passion have fled before it. As the receding wave is generally the strongest, it is not improbable that the anti-masonick leaders, after being driven for a while without rudder or compass, on that political sea which they have excited to rage, may at last be swallowed up in its quicksands, or stranded on its rocks.

Their arrogance and self importance have hither-

to (until chastened by recent defeat,) been almost intolerable, and would not shrink from a comparison with that of the Negro Prince, of whom Montesquieu in his Les esprits de lois, tells the following amusing story.

"Two French Sailors being cast away on the shores of Negroland, applied in their distress to a Negro Prince for assistence. After much difficulty they obtained admission to his royal presence. He was seated on a log of wood which served for his throne. A tattered umbrella held over him by a half famished Negro, served as a canopy of State, and a few ragged subjects armed with stakes hardened at the points by fire, constituted his body guard. The ceremony of introduction had scarcely been closed, when the sable monarch; with much complaceney enquired of his guests—"Am I not much talked of in France."

Although anti-masonry may have extended our fame and made us "much talked of in France," we have yet to learn whether it will add to our political importance or future renown.

Since writing the above, a number of charter elections have been held in the infected territory, and terminated in the defeat of political anti-masonry. In Batavia, Rochester, Geneseo Lockport, Albion and Buffalo, the county towns of Genesee, Monroe, Livingston, Niagara, Orleans and Erie counties, it has been met and vanquished. In Allegany, Cattaraugus and Chautauque counties, a similar fate has attended it. Nothing, in fact, is wanting, but confidence and a little time, for the publick to reflect and consider, and its defeat is certain.

"Our doubts
"Are traitors, and make us loose the good
"We oft might win, by fearing to attempt."

That many good and worthy men are as much opposed to masonry as before, is unquestionably true. It is the anti-masonick system of proscription and intolerance, which they oppose. The institution of anti-masonry is now tottering to its fall, and in a short time will unquestionably be spoken of, as a thing that was, but is no more.

Whether Freemasonry will survive, is another question with which we have nothing at present to do. Should its principles bear the test of publick scrutiny, and the conduct of its members correspond with their professions, it will unquestionably rise triumphant from its present depressed condition, and like a precious metal often refined, acquire new brilliancy by every ordeal. On the othrer hand, should it shrink from publick scrutiny—should its principles be found repugnant to morality, religion and law—should the charges alledged against it, hereafter be investigated by an unprejudiced publick, and a sentence of condemnation be pronounced at its enlightened bar, it requires no prophetick aid to predict its doom. Its members in that case will gradually withdraw, and without new accessions, it must sink, of course, into the ocean of oblivion without a struggle and without a sigh.

The organization, however, of a political party with a view to this result, is wholly unnecessary, it is uncalled for in this enlightened age, and in this favoured land. Publick opinion is sufficient if masonry be worthless. The sentiments of Mr. Holly, in

the late anti-masonick State address, are unworthy of a man. "We are, (says he,) commencing a course "which will necessarily bring with it much disquie- "tude and distress—the intercourse of business will "be obstructed—the laudable associations of neigh- "bourhoods will be convulsed, and many of the best "sympathies of our natures, will be violently turned "away from their customary channels." Such sentiments a Robespiere or a Marat, would have been ashamed to own. No other than men reckless of character, of feelings, and of fame, would have cherished such malignant intentions, and no other than the "architects of ruin" would have given them utterance. It ought not therefore, to excite surprise, that anti-masonry, as taught and practised at the present day, received in that convention a fatal blow.

Freemasonry, though constantly assailed, and often drenched in the blood of her followers—though chains and dungeons have been their doom, and the rack and the wheel have responded to their groans—has hitherto remained unhurt by the demons of ignorance, superstition and tyranny, and by the aid of its enlightened philanthropy and undefiled religion, and its pure and ardent patriotism, has soared aloft, dipped her broad pencil in the clouds of Heaven and spread the cement of brotherly affection thro' earth's remotest realms. She has scattered the brands, extinguished the flames, and unbound the victim.* She has shed her rays in every portion of the habita-

*At the battle of the cedars, about thirty miles from Montreal, on the St. Lawrence, Capt. M'Kinstry, of Col. Patterson's regiment of Continental troops, was twice wounded and taken prisoner by the Indians. His intrepidity as a partizan officer had excited the fears and unforgiving resent-

ble globe, and extended her salutary influence to the distressed in every clime. "Her merited praise is in every quarter of the globe. The widow's thanks and the orphan's tears, are her grateful encomiums. Courtesy and friendship hail her with gratitude. She has promoted the kind intercourse of nations—has softened the asperities and diminished the woes of war—she has smiled upon science and literature, and in concert with other institutions has aided chris-

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ment of the savages, who determined to put him to death. Already had the victim been bound to the tree, and surrounded by the faggots intended for his immolation. Hope had fled, and in the agony of despair he uttered the last mystic appeal of a mason, when as if Heaven had interposed for his preservation, the warrior Brandt understood and saved him. Brandt had been educated in Europe, and was there made a mason. Capt. M'Kinley died in June 1822.

A short time since, the following placard was posted up in the streets of Lisbon to influence the royalists against free masons.

"Let the Queen Donna Carlotta de Bourbon govern and deal death at one blow to the republican monster of free masonry. The gallows and the triangles must work conjointly and with energy, and fires must be kindled in every quarter of Portugal to reduce to ashes the bodies and property of these vile monsters. Then, and then only, may we exclaim safely and triumplantly,

Long live the absolute King,
Long live our holy Religion,
Long live our beloved Queen,
Long live all true Royalists,
Death and destruction to all free masons."

At the last anti-masonick celebration held at Le Roy in the county of Genesee, on the Fourth of July 1828, the following elegant and sentimental toast was given by a gentleman of high standing in the ant imasonick ranks, and one of the vice-presidents at the celebration, and drank by hundreds and some say by thousands, with unbounded applause.

"Free Masonry—May it be put where it will stay put."

The preceding cases show the contrast between masonry and anti-masonry, and also that the latter is substantially the same in Portugal and Le Roy.

tianity in introducing this distinguished era of light and salvation."

"Should she now close her operations, and never "again wield her trowel, extend her plumb-line, nor "lift her hammer, let these utensils be laid up in the "choisest cabinet of her sons, for an everlasting me- "morial of her industry and her alms. Let her "withdraw to the shades of honourable retirement, "and having sunk into her eternal rest, let her mod- "est marble present the indelible inscription, 'Peace "to her ashes, and glory to her name.'"

CHAPTER XXX.

Anti-Masonry in the Church.

Religion, or more properly speaking, the pretence or want of it, has in every age been the subject of bitter animosity. Even its discussion has elicited in many cases more asperity than any other which has fallen under human cognizance. In its struggle for power it has evinced a greater want of candour, and frequently indicated stronger intentions to vex, harass, oppress, and totally ruin, all those opposed to its pretensions, than any thing which has hitherto engaged the attention of mankind.

Hence the framers of our Constitution, as well to preserve religion in its purity as to prevent its direct interference in matters of state, guarded as they supposed every avenue through which it could approach that political fountain from whence civil authority should only flow.

Anti-masonry, intent on power, and conscious of the influence which true religion ever has had and ever ought to have, and which its counterfeit has sometimes had over the minds of men, regarded it at an early day with a wistful eye. Religion, not the religion of our Saviour, but what passes sometimes as such, "in the corrupted currents of this world," intent also on power, under the influence, sometimes of corrupt and designing, and sometimes of weak and inconsiderate men, seized with avidity, as it was supposed, the glorious opportunity thus afforded of advancing her cause, and in some instances, united her destiny with theirs. The effects of this unhallowed combination thus far we have seen—its future consequences remain for time to unfold.

While we contemplate with joy the deserved zeal with which the votaries of Christianity, in imitation of the meek and lowly Jesus, have penetrated the forest's gloom—have scaled the mountains' tops, and sought the objects of a Saviour's love amid the darksome fens, it is with pain that we are compelled to remark in justice to historick truth, that the evidence of their good deeds in this vicinity, is not so abundant as could have been desired, and it is much to be feared that many of their acts will not pass inspection at the last great day in Heaven's Chancery.

The proceedings of the different ecclesiastical tribunals which have been convened and under pretence of advancing the cause of Zion have denounced masons and masonick clergymen, could hardly be comprised within the limits assigned to this narrative, and must therefore be passed over in silence. As anti-masonry, however, in the church, has been so uniform in

its operations, its effect, in the Presbyterian Church in this village, will probably suffice.

Batavia, and the region round about, even as far as Buffalo and Rochester (till lately) it is said have not been remarkable for their growth in grace. The outpourings of the Holy Spirit, unfortunately for our country, as well as those who came hither in hopes of converting a wilderness into fruitful fields, thereby to extend the boundaries of Jehovah's empire, have unfortunately been withheld, and for many years after its settlement,

"The sound of the church-going bell,
These vallies and rocks never heard—
Ne'er sighed at the sound of a knell,
Or smiled when the Sabbath appeared."

Among the first settlers of this village, however, there were some who had experienced religion, and by their lives and conduct had given evidence of their sincerity. Of these, Deacon Benjamin Porter, was the most conspicuous. Educated in a land of Christian light; accustomed for years to the benefits of christianity, and participating largely in its joys, he felt as every good man should feel, a desire to extend those benefits in these uncultivated wilds. His was emphatically the house of prayer. Did sickness or sorrow present its bitter cup to his afflicted neighbour, he was there to assuage its agonies. Did disease prey upon him, he was there to administer consolation; and when the immortal spirit had fled, his was almost the only voice to pronounce its requiem.

As soon as the settlement had progressed so as to justify an attempt to erect a house for publick worship, he was among the first and most efficient of its projectors, and being limited in his means, became

thereby embarrassed. His christian fortitude however, never forsook him, and having for a long time, "carried the Church in his arms," he looked forward with confidence to that period, when it should afford him a resting place from all his troubles.

The Church being at length completed, and a Clergyman settled, all was peace and harmony, till anti-masonry presented itself at her portals. Such was the state of Eden when the Serpent entered its bowers. Anti-masonry, however, did not boldly

"Advance its mis created front."

But like its prototype

"With tract oblique,
At first, as one who seeks access, but fears
To interrupt, sidelong worked its way.
And of its tortuous train,
Curled many a wanton wreath in sight of Eve,
To lure her eye.
Till bolder grown, uncalled before her stood,
But as in gaze admiring: oft it bowed
Its turret crest and sleek enamelled neck
Fawning and licked the ground whereon she stood."

A certain portion of the church having determined on its admission, without manifesting even that coyness visible in every thought and every act of our first mother before the fall, at once bade it welcome.

"Hope elevated, and joy brightened its crest."

The church at last, influenced by some of its corrupt and unprincipled members, united in a request, that anti-masonry should thenceforth be united with christianity in administering at her altar. Deacon Porter being a mason, was thereupon dismissed.

"The Falcon towering in its pride of place
Was by the mousing owl, hawked at and killed."

Notwithstanding the asperity which existed in the church against the masonick institution, it was hoped by many, that Deacon Porter, although a mason, on account of his long and meritorious services—the zeal which he manifested in the cause of his Redeemer—and more especially, on account of the frost of seventy winters which bleached his brow, might for a short time have been spared. But no—the reckless spirit of anti-masonry forbid. Not satisfied with his abstaining from the Lodge, and his promise to do so thereafter, he was required to renounce and proclaim to the world that he had been a hypocrite and villain for years. This he promptly refused, and was therefore excluded from the Church, which he had contributed so much to adorn, and in which he had been so long "a burning and shining light."

Mr. Whitehead, the pastor, unwilling at first to admit anti-masonry into full communion, by over persuasion, at length became its patron, and afterwards its victim. The pulpit resounded with "Morgan and Masonry," till he became satisfied that his usefulness was at an end, when he applied for a dismission. This being refused, he took leave of his church and people in this place, and has never returned.

The Church for some time remained without a Pastor. Mr. Whiting has since been installed as such, and should christianity hereafter be taught and practised, there can be no doubt of its future prosperity. There certainly never was a more ample field, or more abundant materials, and should those materials, "like kindred drops be mingled into one," it will afford a manifestation of Almighty power, which this world has seldom witnessed.

Whether the exclusion of masons from christian fellowship—the pollution of God's holy temple by the spirit of persecution—the perversion of the sacred desk, to purposes of proscription, and the destruction of harmony in religious societies, by the encouragement of anti-masonick intolerance, will advance the Redeemer's kingdom, remains for the All wise dispenser of human events hereafter to determine. We chearfully leave it there. To his decision we bow with reverence, and from it we desire not, if we had the power, ever to appeal.

Note—It was the intention originally of the author to have subjoined to this narrative, a concise history of the origin and progress of free-masonry, and of the persecution which the fraternity have suffered in different ages as well as a view of its principles, for the purpose of obviating the several objections made against it by its opponents. It was also his intention to have submitted to the publick in candour and kindness, some further remarks in relation to the conduct, inconsistency and motives, of those who have ostentatiously seceded. It was found, however, on reflection to require more time and talents to do it justice, than he could at present command, and is therefore omitted.

In conclusion he remarks, that it has been conclusively shown by the testimony of Bruce lately published, that Morgan was taken to Fort Niagara for the purpose of being delivered to the masons in Canada, and was afterwards confined in the Magazine of that Fort. It seems therefore to be settled, that the object in carrying off Morgan, was to produce a separation between him and Miller, as already stated, and not to murder him, as has so often been pretended. His subsequent fate is still uncertain.

Col. King, who occupies a conspicuous place in the foregoing narrative, died at his residence in Youngstown on the 23th of May 1829, and was buried on the following day with military honours, under the direction of the commandant at Fort Niagara. Col. King was in the expedition at Little York, under Gen. Pike, and commanded the troops of the 15th regiment. He was also at Four Mile Creek, where he distinguished himself and was wounded. His funeral was attended by a large concourse of afflicted relatives and friends. Having gone to his long home, masons and anti-masons will, it is hoped, say with one voice PEACE to his ASHES.